

HUMAN NATURE IN CHRISTIAN WORK



A. H. MCKINNEY



W. J. Mosier

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HUMAN NATURE
IN CHRISTIAN WORK

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HUMAN NATURE IN CHRISTIAN WORK

A Manual for Ministers, Directors of Religious
Education, Church School Workers, Club
Leaders and All Others Who Work
With or for People

By

A. H. McKINNEY, D.D.

Author of "A Top Notch Teacher," etc.

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HUMAN NATURE IN CHRISTIAN WORK

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“What the world needs is less human nature and more humane nature.”—*The New York Telegram.*

“The’s as much human nature in some folks as th’ is in others, if not more.—*David Harum.*


“Our best friend is the one who helps us to find out our real selves and who endeavors to show us how to make proper use of our abilities.”—*John Wanamaker.*

“Oh, wad some power the giftie gie us
To see oursel’s as ithers see us!
It wad frae mony a blunder free us,
And foolish notion.”

—*Robert Burns.*

“Most of the human race is still groaning under the belief that each of us is a special and unrelated creation, just as men for ages saw no relationships between the fowls of the air, the beasts of the field, and the fish of the sea. But, thank God, we are beginning to learn that unity is as much a law of life as selfish struggle, and love a more vital force than avarice or lust of power or place. A Wandering Carpenter knew it, and taught it, twenty centuries ago.”

—*David Grayson.*



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FOREWORD

PEOPLE, people, people all about us; they are everywhere; they are inescapable. Should I succeed in eluding every one else, I cannot get away from myself—and I am human. Why do we not know more about human nature? This manual answers this question in part. The chicken-raiser knows much about fowl, the horse-breeder has learned a great deal about horses; the successful operator of a dairy farm is well acquainted with cows; the apiarist has made an exhaustive study of bees, but man—the crowning work of God's creation—is studied by comparatively few persons. How may we become better acquainted with human nature? This handbook answers this question. A blacksmith used to welding iron said that his job was easier than that of a Christian worker. Why? Because it is easier to handle iron than to deal with human nature. How may I as a Christian worker get along with human nature? This little book gives many practical suggestions along this line.

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I

THE VALUE OF STUDYING PEOPLE

INT.: JESUS KNEW ALL MEN

RECALL JESUS'

Knowledge of the Bible
Knowledge of nature
Knowledge of human nature

REASONS FOR STUDYING HUMAN NATURE

A most fascinating study
A broadening study
A profitable study
A self-revealing study
A study leading to the way to God

WHAT IS THE GREATEST HANDICAP TO OUR
CHURCH WORK?

Various answers given
Failures because human nature has not
been studied
Psychology and sociology good
Study of people better

CON.: STUDY PEOPLE

Seriously
Sympathetically

I

THE VALUE OF STUDYING PEOPLE

“JESUS did not trust himself unto them, for that he knew all men, and because he needed not that any one should bear witness concerning man; for he himself knew what was in man.”

This declaration concerning the great Teacher is recorded in John 2:24 and 25. It indicates that he had a knowledge of human nature surpassing that obtained by the ordinary Christian worker. As we have accepted him as our Example it may be appropriate to RECALL JESUS’

Knowledge of the Bible. Humanly speaking there can be no question that Jesus owed much of his success to his familiarity with the Old Testament, which he had so mastered that he could make use of its

contents in any question, dispute or emergency that arose. Nowhere was his skill in using the Scriptures as a sword more marked than in his resisting temptation at the very beginning of his public ministry. Jesus' successful imitator as a worker will know his Bible—both Old and New Testaments—so that he can use it readily and skilfully.

Knowledge of nature. It would be a most interesting and profitable study to collate the references to nature in the teachings of the matchless Pedagogue. His parables, many of which were based on references to nature, will ever stand as examples not only of a most interesting but also most effective form of teaching. Who can improve, for example, on the Parable of the Grain of Mustard Seed?

He who would be fully equipped as a religious worker must draw constantly and lavishly on that inexhaustible treasury which we call nature. What riches are here! What results may accrue for both

teacher and student from the reverent study of nature! Said a devout pomologist, "I do not understand how a person can study nature and not come to know God." This truth was voiced in a different form by a very practical engineer, who when the value of nature-study was being discussed exclaimed, "Every blade of grass on my lawn makes me think of God." And a poet has added his testimony in these lines:

"The flowers are the alphabet of angels,
whereby,
They write on hills and fields mysterious
truth."

A very successful raiser of peaches whose great delight was to help man know God and do his will once said to the writer, "If you will spend the month of May with me in my peach orchard I shall point out to you enough analogies of spiritual truths to furnish you with illustrations for preaching and teaching for many years." This enthusiast had caught the spirit of his Master regarding the value of nature in teaching religious truth.

Knowledge of human nature. Herein the Master excelled. Because of his knowledge of human nature he knew how to approach people. That of course does not mean that he played the sycophant or the politician but that he varied his methods in accordance with the personality he had to deal with. The student of the Gospels has had his attention drawn to Jesus' treatment of Nicodemus and of the woman of Samaria. He led both into an appreciation of truth but by entirely different routes because he understood each individual. Contrast his interview with Bartimeus and that with Zaccheus; recall his tenderness to the sinner and his severity to the Pharisee, his treatment of the two malefactors crucified with him and you find most expressive commentaries on the text with which this chapter opens. Jesus knew human nature at the core and in all of its superficialities. The developing Christian worker who would approximate to his Master's skill in leading others to the truth will study human nature in order to become like his great Example.

In order to impress this thought let us consider some REASONS FOR STUDYING HUMAN NATURE, as follows:

It is a most fascinating study. Did you ever become intimate with a collector of insects, or bugs, or butterflies, or beetles? Have you noticed how fascinated he is as he hunts for new specimens, classifies those he finds, builds up an ever increasing collection and exhibits with glowing words and unmistakable pride the results of his long-continued labors? His is fascination indeed! But contrast his labors and results with what might have followed if he had spent his energies in studying boys and girls, men and women. The time has already come when many persons are experiencing the fascination of the study of people, for with all its blemishes and defects, human nature has great beauty and boundless possibilities.

It is a broadening study. There is danger in these days of wonderful material develop-

ment that the cultural value of any study may be overlooked. Science is in the foreground, and justly so, for every scientific advancement makes for humanity's happiness, but it is found necessary to go to books and nature for mental culture. In human nature there is much to be found that is of real cultural value to the student who comes to its study with the proper spirit. The lady who sought culture in the study of animalculæ would have obtained it much more quickly and broadly in the study of boys if she had entered into that study with the same zest which she displayed in examining a specimen of stagnant water. The Christian worker needs all the culture attainable and especially that which comes from the study of humanity, for, as we have been frequently reminded, "The proper study of mankind is man."

It is a profitable study. What vast sums of money are being made because men have studied cows and commercially applied the results of such study! Birds are being

studied in such ways that great financial returns are following the study. What is at the foundation of the ever increasing fur industry from which immense profits are being made? Is it not the study of animals and as some of the results in many cases the breeding for commercial purposes of animals that were formerly found only in woods or wilderness?

What money comes from the study of human nature? Ask the fakir, the fight-promoter or the profiteer who takes advantage of and exploits the foibles and frailties of mankind. For the true worker for God and man there are dividends far exceeding in value any received by those who are preying on the weaknesses of humanity—they come when truth is accepted, character is developed, God becomes known and service for man is performed. He who knows his fellows will be the agent in the accomplishment of these things when others fail. Hence the teacher or other Christian worker should study human nature in order to prepare himself to derive the very largest divi-

dends from the great endeavor in which he is engaged.

It is a self-revealing study. If one who is not afraid of the truth sits quietly and reviews his successes and failures in Christian life and service he probably comes to some such conclusion as this: I have made many mistakes because I was not familiar enough with my Bible, I have made other mistakes because I did not know other people or because I was not well acquainted with God, but the greatest number of my mistakes and the most serious ones were due to the fact that I did not know myself. How men blunder through life, blaming God or circumstances or other people when they should blame themselves! And the correctives for this blundering? They are many but the one we are emphasizing now is a study of human nature which results in a study of self. He studied his Bible, he studied music, he studied oratory and became such a masterful singer and preacher of the Gospel that many were won to God through

his ministry, but he himself fell because he had never studied human nature and consequently had never gotten acquainted with himself. She was a well-known worker who had served on many directorates and committees; she had given liberally of her time, talents and money but she came to a period of sorrow which led her into the blackness of night. Why? She did not know herself. She had never studied human nature and consequently had failed to realize how intensely human she was. The teacher who wishes to avoid such mistakes and their tragic consequences, will study human nature sympathetically and appreciatively. Applying the results of such study to himself he will be saved from grievous mistakes.

It is a study leading to the way to God. "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" exclaimed the Psalmist. Is it any wonder that he thus cried out? When one considers man (which is another term for human nature) with all his pettiness, meanness, selfishness and brutality one naturally

wonders why God is mindful of him. But as one carefully studies man (that is people) he finds in him so much that is pure, noble, unselfish, even Godlike, that he begins to marvel and then he thinks of the perfect Man who incarnated all the good found in humanity and by natural stages his thoughts go back to God and then he understands why the Psalmist is able to continue, "Thou hast made him but little lower than God" (margin *the angels*, Psalm 8:5).

Surely if the scientist can see God in the growing grass or the peach culturist can find God in his orchard, the student of human nature may find God reflected in the masterpiece of his creation.

The poet has sublimely sung

"The spacious firmament on high,
With all the blue ethereal sky,
And spangled heavens, a shining frame,
Their great Original proclaim.

"In reason's ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious voice;
For ever singing, as they shine,
'The Hand that made us is divine.' "

If Addison could find God in the heavens, cannot the honest student find him in man?

Suppose a group of workers were to discuss seriously this question: WHAT IS THE GREATEST HANDICAP TO OUR CHURCH WORK?—what answer would be given to the question?

Here is a worker who says, Our building is inadequate for our school. We cannot grade properly nor divide into departments or classes until we have a modern building.

Another responds, We have an excellent building, but our neighborhood is against us. The people who go to church have moved away and those who have come into our community do not care for religion. We could accomplish something if our church were located in a better neighborhood.

A third is on his feet. We are too poor to keep up with the times. We cannot afford to purchase equipment. We have a fair building and many poor people who send their children to us but we need most of all an endowment in order to have the

money to buy what is necessary to run our church properly.

Thus the discussion goes on. One laments the lack of this and another the need of that but no one ventures to suggest that among the necessities for effective work is a knowledge of human nature. Why is this? Is it not because so little attention has been paid to this need? Given people to teach, a well-appointed building, adequate equipment and enough money for necessary expenses, failures have resulted because human nature has not been considered. Hence we may add to the foregoing: A very important reason for church workers getting acquainted with human nature is in order that the best results may be had in their work.

Great attention has been paid to pedagogy, which is the study of the child. Adolescence is a word to conjure with in these pedagogical days. Every teacher knows that a knowledge of this interesting period of development is necessary in order to instruct those in the 'teen age. The

writer is not arguing for less study of childhood or youth; he has long stood for more. This, however, he thoughtfully asserts: There are those who have spent much time in studying about the CHILD who know little or nothing about children. So-called experts have written papers or led discussions on ADOLESCENCE and still remain ignorant of the boy on Fool Hill or the girl in the boy-crazy period of life. In other words, there are two kinds of boys—the pedagogue's boy and the real boy, just as there are two kinds of girls—the one we find in books and the one we encounter at home when she manifests her real self. Psychology is a popular study but one may pose as a psychologist and not know human nature. The study of sociology is a close second in popularity but one may be well-versed in this science and not know people.

We are urging our readers to study people—seriously, sympathetically—for the purpose of learning how to approach them in order to present truth in such a way that they will accept him who is the way, the

truth and the life and through him come to the Heavenly Father, for unless the worker leads others to God his best work is only partially successful.

II

WHY, WHERE AND WHEN STUDY HUMAN NATURE?

INT.: BRUCE ON STUDYING MEN
THOSE WHO TRY TO INFLUENCE OTHERS
SHOULD KNOW THEM

STUDY HUMAN NATURE
Not to discover faults or flaws
Not to disclose weaknesses
But to discover points of contacts
And to find the best in others

WHY IS HUMAN NATURE NOT STUDIED MORE?
We are all human
Most of us are foolishly kind
Many persons are cowardly

WHERE MAY HUMAN NATURE BE STUDIED?
At home
On the street
In the daily vocation
In church and church school

WHEN MAY HUMAN NATURE BE STUDIED?
At any time
ILL.: On the "L" road
In a street-car

CON.: THE ONE STUDIED MUST BE OFF HIS
GUARD

II

WHY, WHERE AND WHEN STUDY HUMAN NATURE?

IN order to get the best results from the study of human nature one must be convinced of the value of such study. The question: Why study people? was answered in part in the preceding chapter. From a business standpoint, a practical psychologist has this to say:

“The secrets of business success are not to be gained by book study alone. There must be study of men too—persistent, painstaking study both of men who are themselves successful and of men who are failures. In fact, the study of men who have failed is fully as important for your purposes as the study of successful men. You need to know what to avoid doing, as well as what to do.”—*H. Addington Bruce.*

If for business purposes the study of human nature is so necessary, how much more

is it of prime importance that those who are endeavoring to influence others for good should know them? This question naturally leads to the consideration of our motive for studying human nature. Before answering the question: Where and when study human nature? let us examine the purpose of such study on the part of the church school teacher.

STUDY HUMAN NATURE:

Not to discover faults or flaws worthy of censure. The prolonged study of any subject leads to revelations that are disagreeable or worse. This is particularly true of the study of people, but the real student accepts the unpleasant traits found in others without magnifying them or attaching undue importance to them.

Not to disclose weaknesses in order to hold them up to ridicule. What is easier than to hurt the feelings of others? What results in less real good than ridicule? The temptation to raise a laugh at the expense

of another must be steadfastly resisted by the intelligent student. This resistance will become easier in the degree that he knows the object of his study. It is ignorance of one another that keeps folks apart. Knowledge of people results in understanding; understanding produces sympathy; sympathy leads to love. Persons are hated because they are not known; they are loved when they become known. Hence the study of human nature draws men together and ridicule, which is a weapon of ignorance, is never indulged in.

To discover points of contact in order to approach others helpfully. One of the encouraging facts accepted by modern pedagogy is that we no longer teach books—not even the Book of books—we no longer present subjects. We teach people. The pupil is by far the most important factor in the church school. The teacher must know the Bible for it is his textbook. The more skillfully he can present religion and morality, which are the principal subjects of the

church school curriculum, the greater will be his success as a teacher; but even more essential than a knowledge of his Book and his subjects is a knowledge of him who is to be inspired to live in accordance with the teachings of the Book. Hence the first great endeavor in the study of human nature is made in order that the teacher may know how to find points of contact with those whom he instructs. So with workers in other departments of the church.

To find the best in others in order to inspire them to do their best. Dr. Frank Crane in one of his illuminating essays narrates how a certain Mr. O. J. H. produced a marvelous change in a fourteen-furnace steel plant within the short period of one year. Where there had been rioting and discontent among the workmen the plant was making the world's record in steel production. Why? Because Mr. O. J. H. was always "modest, kind, common, good-natured, expecting confidently that every man is doing his best."

“The natural kindliness of Mr. O. J. H. accounts for the improvement,” interposes some one who knows nothing about work in a steel plant. One might be kind in such a plant and have only anarchy there. Of Mr. O. J. H.’s kindness growing out of his good heart there can be no doubt. But back of his treatment of his men was also intelligence. He had studied human nature; he knew his fellow workmen. Again we may complete the circle—knowledge, understanding, sympathy, love manifested in kind deeds—result—the men did their best. What a volume of suggestion is here for the Christian worker who will not only recognize it but also act upon it, not in a mere mechanical way but with intelligence!

To the one who grants the truth of the foregoing there naturally arises the question: WHY IS HUMAN NATURE NOT STUDIED MORE?—The answers to this question would be almost as many and as varied as the individuals one meets in ordinary life.

Here is a fair summation of such answers:

We are all human. One of the first results of an honest study of human nature is the discovery (or rediscovery) of one's own imperfections as we shall see later on. Why is it almost impossible to imagine a class of persons intently engaged in studying themselves? Because very few persons want to see themselves as they really are. The study of human nature beginning with one's self as the subject of study leads to revelations that the ordinary person shuns as he would try to avoid a contagious disease. We may joke with one another, but the presentation of cold facts as to personality is generally resented. That is one most significant reason why human nature is not studied more.

Most of us are foolishly kind. While we do not wish our own weaknesses revealed—not even to ourselves—we do not wish to hurt the feelings of others. This is especially true of those dear to us and of those in whom we are most interested. Three church school teachers may discuss some imperfections in a friend who teaches in the

same school but it is very rarely that one of the three has the hardness of heart to inform the other of his defect or lack, which formed the subject of discussion. The rule is rather to praise that which pleases and ignore that which offends or hurts. The writer is not condemning this practice but simply stating the fact in order to adduce a reason why human nature is not really studied and why that which is apparent without study is not made use of for the improvement of others. Kindness is a virtue to be cultivated but one may be foolishly kind.

Many persons are cowardly. Who dare face himself as he really is? Who has moral courage enough to help another look at himself? Easier is it to suffer for another than to tell him the truth concerning himself. What has been the fate of the reformers of men? Go to the black dungeon of Machærus where John the Baptist was imprisoned in Perea or to the cross on Calvary for the answer.

It requires great courage to be a student of human nature or to make use of the results of that study in a helpful way.

The study of human nature does not require one to attend a university, professional school or class, for wherever people are there is human nature and there it may be studied. But as there is always the possibility of ignoring general answers to questions, we shall answer specifically the question: **WHERE MAY HUMAN NATURE BE STUDIED?** as follows:

At home. Here most persons spend a large part of the time and here human nature is seen in the crude. There is a tendency to assume disguises for public appearances but the privacy of the home does not seem to call for those external shields and guards so common elsewhere. Hence there is no better place than home for the study of human nature by one who has the proper motive for that study and determines to use the results of it in helping those about him.

Very few are the church school teachers who have not been urged over and over to visit their pupils in their homes in order to get better acquainted with them. An occasional visit to a home might not be productive of results so far as more effective teaching is concerned, but a real acquaintance with the home life of the pupil would result in such revelations of what that one really is that great changes would follow in presenting truth to him.

On the street. Persons met casually are generally regarded as members of a crowd or mass of which there is little knowledge and therefore in which there is slight interest. If these same persons were considered as individuals—each one human, very human—there would be such an interest in them that they would be subjects of observation which would amply repay the observer in the addition made to his ever increasing fund of knowledge of human nature. What psychologists call the “apperceptive mass” would be so enlarged by this

process that every person met on the street would add something to what the student knows of human nature. This addition would be made so naturally and easily that the study of human nature would be a delight instead of a hardship, as the mere mention of it now is to many persons who appreciate neither its possibilities nor its value.

The next time you take a walk you may test yourself to ascertain what effect is produced upon you by those whom you meet; you may easily ascertain whether or not you are a student of human nature.

In the daily vocation. The business or profession followed by one as his calling, whatever it may be, affords continued opportunity to study human nature, for there he will find people and people are human. Generally one is so occupied with the ordinary routine of life that he fails to find in it a rich mine of human nature from which he may take nuggets of information that will be of inestimable value in whatever

work he may be engaged and also of immense help in the development of his own personality.

Forty years ago a young school teacher noted the idiosyncrasies of an older teacher in the same school to such good purpose that he now knows that a large share of his success as an instructor is due to his ability to refrain from indulging in many of the foolish things that marred the work of the one observed. Such testimonies may be given in all walks of life especially by those who have been successful in dealing with others.

If, however, there is any consideration given to those met in daily work, the temptation is strong to neglect to learn anything of value from them on the supposition that they are exceptions to the general run of people. There is the mistake made by that large class of Christian workers who imagine that it would be much better for them if they could change their environment and thus come into contact with persons other than those with whom they have to deal.

The wise student of human nature soon learns that success in dealing with others results in those changes which are made in himself rather than in removal from present conditions, for, as we have been told, "there's as much human nature in some folks as there is in others, if not more."

In church and church school. While human nature is everywhere, for some unaccountable reason, very unfortunate manifestations of it are frequently in evidence in connection with the work of the church and the church school. This is what was hinted at by the blacksmith who, after two years of observation, said to his Sunday-school superintendent, "Your job is harder than mine. It is easier to weld iron than to get along with people." Alas! this is true. But is it not equally true that a Christian worker must "get along with people" if he is to be of any real service to them? Later on we shall consider some of the results of the study of human nature in this regard. Just here the emphasis is put on the possi-

bility of giving better service for Christ and his Kingdom by applying knowledge obtained by those engaged in the work of the church and church school for the purpose of understanding them and as one result of the understanding getting along with them better.

Thirty years ago exhibitions of human nature on the part of three workers in a church led to such a breach that it has not yet been healed. A fact like this, and it could be multiplied many times, proves the value of the proper application of the study of human nature in the work of the Kingdom.

Lest all this may prove a bit wearisome let us sum it up by repeating in a sentence: Wherever people are, there is human nature and there it may be studied.

The answer to our second question: **WHEN MAY HUMAN NATURE BE STUDIED?** is suggested by the foregoing. It is this: Human nature may be studied at all times. That this is not a mere statement is proven by the following:

One night the writer, seated in an elevated railroad car, was thinking over the question: When may persons study human nature? Opposite him sat a police officer in uniform, reading a newspaper. As the train stopped at a station the trainman called out a street number. The policeman sat still until the train started, then he jumped up, made a dash for the closed gate, and was very angry because the trainman would not allow him to open the gate and jump off the moving train. His language was more vigorous than elegant as he threatened "to get square" with the man who was doing his duty. Here was an opportunity to study human nature: a man paid to protect life and to preserve order boiling over with rage because another would not allow him to risk his life and break a rule of the railroad company. Late at night after a day of exacting service would be regarded as a most unpropitious time to study human nature, but such was not the fact. At this time as at all times the opportunity for such study was right at hand, for people were present.

"Look at that boy opposite," said a lady to her friend in a street-car.

"Why, what is the matter with him?"

"He's all dressed up and trying to be good, but it is very hard on him."

This conversation illustrates a truth that must ever be kept in mind by the student of human nature, namely; there is no place where, nor time when, human nature may be studied if the subject of the study knows that he is under observation. Poses will be made, shields will be put up and the object of the study defeated by the one who is conscious of the fact that he is even in the mind of another. This truth accounts for the saying: Really to know a person we must live with him. Let us paraphrase it thus: To be able to study a person to any good purpose the one studied must be off his guard.

III

STUDY OF ONE'S SELF

INT.: LACK OF KNOWLEDGE OF SELF AT A
FRIENDS' MEETING

HOW THIS STUDY MAY BE CONDUCTED

SPEND TIME IN SELF-CONTEMPLATION

The largest room in the world

BE WILLING TO SEE YOURSELF THROUGH THE
EYES OF OTHERS

A young preacher's mannerisms

STUDY THE BIBLE TO GET ACQUAINTED WITH
SELF

Coleridge's testimony

Scripture passages suggested

SEEK THE HELP OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Moses

Saul of Tarsus

The Epistle to Philemon

BE HOPEFUL

Optimism and pessimism discounted

BE PATIENT

God's patience

Patience with one's self

BE IMPARTIAL

A successful superintendent

CON.: EVERY MAN IS THREE MEN
KNOW THYSELF

III

STUDY OF ONE'S SELF

THE importance of the study of human nature has led to many questions concerning HOW THIS STUDY MAY BE CONDUCTED. Earnest students have not been satisfied with suggestions as to when and where human nature may be studied, but have sought for specific suggestions. Answers to such queries may be summarized thus: Study yourself and then study others.

One never ceases to wonder at the lack of knowledge of self manifested by multitudes of persons. Whether this ignorance is real or feigned will never be known, but it is a fact that few persons ever give the least indication that they are acquainted with self. In order to get a true photograph or a proper estimate the seeker after real knowledge of an individual rarely asks that one for information as to what he is, but obtains that information from others. Why is

this? Is it not because one is not conscious of traits that are clearly evident to others? Illustrations of this truth might be multiplied, but one may suffice:

At a Friends' meeting, a Friend was pleading most eloquently and persuasively for all present to do everything possible to put an end to war. He argued that what he pleaded for is possible only when men love one another. He then gave illustrations of those who call themselves Christians exhibiting hatred rather than love. One of these illustrations had to do with the members of a country church who decided to buy a new carpet for the church building. One party wanted red carpet and the other green. The discussion had extended over two years and the carpet had not been purchased. While the speaker was telling the story he exclaimed in a parenthetical sentence, "I hope they will never get it"—referring to the carpet. Alas for human nature! Alas for the lack of knowledge of self! Here was one zealously pleading for the manifestation of love showing by his

wish that he was under the influence of its opposite.

To the one who wishes to continue as he is, what follows will be valueless. For him who really desires to know himself the following suggestions are made:

Spend time in self-contemplation. This exhortation runs afoul of many popular proverbs and current sayings. Nevertheless at the risk of being condemned by the reader we say again, Spend time in self-contemplation, and once more we repeat, Spend *much* time in self-contemplation if you would become acquainted with yourself and through self-knowledge begin to know human nature.

There can be no question that the largest room in the world is the room for improvement. In this room are two pieces of furniture to which the attention of the one desiring to know himself is particularly directed. There is the mirror. Look into this mirror, not merely to examine your features, but more especially to see yourself as you really

are. Then sit in the other piece of furniture, which is the chair of contemplation. Sit there quietly, sit there all alone except as God is present and think of yourself as you have caught the reflection in the mirror. This is no easy task. There are myriads of persons who dare not attempt this quiet, searching self-contemplation because by no possibility do they wish to see themselves as they really are. They are the people who are trying to persuade themselves that they are this or that, while those who come into closest touch with them know they are just the opposite. This fear of becoming acquainted with self accounts for much of the insanity, much of the indulgence in drugs and intoxicants, much of the excessive seeking for pleasure so noticeable in these days when it seems impossible for hosts of people ever to be quiet except when they are physically exhausted. The student of human nature must be quiet; he must be quiet long enough to get acquainted with himself whatever the consequences may be. He will then be in that condition of poise which will

make it possible to study others to advantage.

Be willing to see yourself through the eyes of others. One who became a great teacher often told of one of the first steps he took in becoming a real teacher. It was his custom to lead a group of Sunday-school teachers every Thursday night. As he did not seem to be getting on very well, he said to these teachers, Please tell me what mistakes I am making in leading this teachers' meeting. At first there was no response to his request, but after some time one of the teachers got up courage enough to say, You talk too much in teachers' meeting. Replying to his questions, she told the leader just what she meant. Instead of taking up the greater part of the time in lecturing, he should spend much of the study period in drawing out what is in the minds of the students, in questioning them, in getting them to ask questions and to make suggestions. The would-be teacher retired to the room for improvement, looked at himself

squarely in the mirror, sat down in the chair of contemplation and saw himself through the eyes of another. So much did he profit by this process that he got others to tell him of his mistakes which he did his best to rectify that instead of remaining an ordinary lecturer he became a brilliant teacher and in time a most helpful critic of other teachers.

The mannerisms of a young preacher led to so much levity on the part of adolescent members of the congregation and so shocked their fathers and mothers that a number of the latter gathered to devise some plan of dealing with the minister. An old Scotchman whose advice was sought assured the ladies that everything would be all right when the pastor returned from his vacation, which would begin in a few weeks.

“But what has his vacation to do with the way Mr. Blank acts in the pulpit?” they demanded.

“Don’t you know our minister is to be married while he is away?” was the question put to them,

“Yes, but what has that to do with his actions?”

“He is going to marry the daughter of Doctor Blank, who is a professor in the Theological Seminary. She will tell him of his mistakes and queer actions. If he loves her as he ought to he will see himself through her eyes and he will so conduct himself that we will have no cause for complaint.”

So it proved. It took some time for the talented young wife to get her husband to see himself as others saw him and longer still for him to master his pulpit peculiarities of speech and action, but patience and perseverance on the part of the pastor and his wife won out, as they always do, and he became a convincing preacher greatly beloved by his people.

The student of self must see himself as others see him, thus in some way realizing the wish of Burns. Unselfish, intelligent application of the knowledge of self thus obtained sends one forward to a better appreciation of human nature in others.

Study the Bible for the purpose of getting acquainted with self. There are many methods of Bible study, each having its distinct object in view. The Christian should not neglect the devotional study of the Book, for that is one method of spiritual upbuilding and there are many who are spiritually starved because they feed body and mind and neglect the spirit. In addition to its devotional uses the Bible may be studied because of its revelations of human nature. Coleridge, a profound student, declared that he believed the Bible because it found him. It will find any person who really wishes to be discovered. There are many who have closed the Bible and ask flippant questions as to who Cain's wife was or how the whale swallowed Jonah, who really turned against the Book because it so clearly portrayed themselves. The Bible is indeed a mirror into which one may look not only to see himself but also to get a very clear reflection of the person he ought to be. He who doubts this has but to make an honest study of this collection of books

in order to see himself portrayed just as he is and also to see himself pictured as by the grace of God he may become. If this study is begun fundamentally, as all studies should be begun, and continued step by step, there will be formed such a conception of self as will lead the student to long to become like the perfect Man whose picture is drawn in the Gospels. As this longing for righteousness and the power to live aright develops there will come a dissatisfaction with self, as in the case of the great apostle Paul, which will lead to an upward reach for power to live aright. In response to this out-reaching the Lord of life will impart that life which Jesus came to give to those who would receive it.

Many passages may be cited in this connection. Let us look at three as specimens. Who can read the Fifty-first Psalm in the proper spirit without a consciousness of sin, from which he prays God to deliver him and keep him? There are many who confidently announce that they wish no creed but the Sermon on the Mount. So be it. Let such

a one seriously examine himself, using this matchless discourse for an acid test. Where does he arrive? Most likely at the point, where he concludes that much of his life has been a sham, so far as the Master's standard is concerned. He has been deluding himself; now that he is becoming acquainted with himself, he must begin all over again to live in reality. How fond we are of the Thirteenth Chapter of First Corinthians! How inspiring it is, especially when sounded forth by a cultivated reader. But just now we are thinking about the great love chapter for another purpose. We are going to sit down quietly and read it over carefully without regard to oratorical expression or effect, for the purpose of determining how much of it has become a part of daily living. As one contrasts his poor substitute for love with "the greatest thing in the world," where does he stand? Is it not at the place where he is beginning—just beginning—to get acquainted with himself? There can be no doubt that the Bible is a great revealer of self to the one

who is courageous enough to study it for the purpose of obtaining self-knowledge.

Seek the help of the Holy Spirit. If to the study of the Bible be added a real desire for help from the Spirit of God one may come to know oneself as God knows him. The quicker one comes to see himself as God sees him the better instrument is he for God to use.

Moses was skilled in all the learning of the Egyptians of his day; he was a great man in many respects, but he was so lamentably deficient in one thing—he did not know himself. After forty years' tuition in the wilderness with the Spirit of God as his teacher he came forth knowing himself, knowing human nature and therefore prepared to be a leader. Let us not argue whether he ranked second, third or fourth among the great men of the world, we know that he was a leader used by the Almighty to accomplish great things. Much of his qualifications for this leadership were due to his knowledge of human nature and he

knew people because he became acquainted with himself.

When Saul of Tarsus, another of the great men of the world, was being prepared for his unique labors, he went down into Arabia. There, as he became acquainted with the Christ whom he had formerly hated, he also became acquainted with himself. Nor did this study of self cease when the Apostle to the Gentiles plunged into his tireless service for mankind. He continued to become better acquainted with himself, as evidenced by references in his Epistles. One result of this self-knowledge was that he who at first did not consider himself less than the chief of the apostles became in his own estimation the chief of sinners. But great as was this result of study of self, it was not the only one, for the study helped Paul to understand and deal with human nature in remarkable ways. For an illustration of this understanding coupled with skill and power restudy with the thought of human nature in mind that gem of Paul's writings, The Epistle to Philemon. When

you comprehend the significance of this short letter you may long to become a winner of men as its writer was. If this longing sends you to the study of self, the design of this chapter shall have been accomplished, for we are urging self-study as a prerequisite to a knowledge of human nature and our object in knowing persons better should be that we may lead them to higher things, especially to Christ who is the Way to God.

In carrying out this course of study it must not be expected that full and satisfactory self-knowledge will be quickly attainable. There will be many things hard, unpleasant, perhaps unpalatable, to face. Hence the determined student must

Be hopeful. Optimism on the one hand and pessimism on the other are both to be discounted. Only he who is willing to accept himself as he really is with the hope that now that he knows the truth he will be able to take the steps necessary to improvement, need begin the search for self-knowl-

edge. The Lord is able and willing to take any one and prepare him for better service, for he has great things to be done. The one who is hopeful while he is becoming acquainted with his own shortcomings puts himself in that attitude wherein great improvement is possible. Then there are talents, acquirements, possibilities that will become revealed to the one who is hopefully seeking to know himself. If he is full of hope that these things may be more effectively employed in his great work of teaching, he is putting himself in the way of making the most that can be made of his personal possessions.

Be patient. Keep in mind always how patient God is with us and let us be patient with ourselves. Many a teacher who prays for patience in dealing with those whom he instructs, never asks the Lord for the power to be patient with himself. Many have been the resignations or withdrawals from the blessed work of church school teaching because of impatience with self. When a fault

or imperfection is pointed out, when an improvement is suggested, when a hint is given as to what might be possible, the very natural but very foolish impulse is to reason somewhat on this line: Well, if that is what I am, or if that is what I do, what use is there of my trying to teach? I'll give up and let some one better qualified take my place. This reasoning is as wrong as it is foolish. The corrective for it is the resolve to be patient with one's self and to persevere until improvement results. Nor has this reprehensible impatience always to do with defects of personality or method. There are many efficient teachers, who have great latent possibilities, undeveloped or but partially developed because their possessors are not willing patiently to bring them to perfection. If the great army of earnest, devoted teachers were to set themselves patiently to make the most of the powers possessed, there is nothing that God could not accomplish through them in imparting instruction and giving training. Pray then, not once nor twice, but continu-

ously and earnestly for strength and patience to become the teacher that you may become.

How poor are they that have not patience!
What wound did ever heal but by degrees.

—*Shakespeare.*

Be impartial. Teachers are exhorted to be impartial with their pupils, but this admonition has to do with the teacher himself. A successful superintendent who did much to keep his teachers up to a high grade of efficiency made these rules: I will expect nothing of my teachers that I am not willing to do myself. I will criticize myself as carefully as I criticize others. And he did. He was not partial to himself; a very marked result was that he grew more and more efficient as a teacher. It is not easy to be impartial with one's self. To form a just estimate of one's strong points as well as of one's weaknesses calls for self-control. But it is possible thus to be impartial, and he who endeavors to be so is on the highway to teaching power.

Lest we forget let us sum up what we have read: One may come to know self by developing an honest confidence in oneself, by making proper use of the room for improvement, by studying the Bible as a revealer of human nature and by asking the Holy Spirit to help in this quest for self-knowledge.

It has been well said that every man is three men: the man he thinks he is, the man others know him to be, and the man that he really is in God's sight. In the measure that a person comes to know himself as he is in God's sight, in that measure has he prepared himself to be used by God for the good of others. In this day of Christian service, when there is abroad such a yearning desire to benefit others, the Christian cannot afford to be lacking in a knowledge of human nature for that is the material with which he is to work. As a background for this understanding of others is a real acquaintance with self. Is it any wonder then that the ancient Greeks repeated and reiterated the command: Know thyself? Shall

not we of these latter days place within our
souls and if possible hang over our mirrors
these words

KNOW THYSELF

IV

HOW STUDY HUMAN NATURE IN OTHERS?

INT.: A KNOWLEDGE OF SELF IS NOT SUFFICIENT

HOW MAY HUMAN NATURE BE STUDIED?

BY QUIET OBSERVATION

The woman who sees

The man who hears

BY MINGLING SYMPATHETICALLY WITH MANY
PERSONS

A fellow feeling

A great mistake

BY COMPARING NOTES WITH OTHERS

A file man

A grater man

A persistent old man

A four-year-old beauty

A husband and wife

BY MAKING ALLOWANCES FOR EXCEPTIONAL
CASES

See illustrations in Appendix

BY READING

The Bible

Fiction

Shakespeare's plays

Newspapers and periodicals

Biographies

Books to be written

BY USING KNOWLEDGE ACQUIRED

CON.: STUDY JESUS THE MODEL

IV

HOW STUDY HUMAN NATURE IN OTHERS?

As suggested in the preceding chapter, a knowledge of self is most important in the study of human nature, but something more is needed. As *Quackenbush* says:

“The maxim, ‘Know thyself,’ does not suffice. Know others, know them well; that’s my advice.”

We have already noted that human nature may be studied everywhere and at all times. With this fact in mind, it may be helpful to answer more specifically the question: HOW MAY HUMAN NATURE BE STUDIED? Here are some of the answers to that question:

By quiet observation. He who sets out to be a public investigator of human nature will doubtless find himself in hot water all

the time, but he who unobtrusively uses his senses in order to get better acquainted with his fellows not only has right at hand a rich field for investigation, but is sure of a very valuable harvest of most interesting facts which he may collate, classify and use at his leisure. The Woman Who Sees for years has been making us acquainted with human nature as in her delightful way she has narrated for the benefit of others what she has seen. The Man Who Hears may, without any spying or eavesdropping, learn many things concerning humanity that the heedless one remains ignorant of. Of course all cultured persons detest the "butter-in," the busy-body, the pryer-into-other-people's business. May the tribe of such decrease rapidly, for they have caused untold trouble in the world. To keep one's eyes and ears open so as to become better acquainted with people in order to avoid mistakes due to ignorance of human nature and in order to learn how best to benefit others is quite a different matter; it is for this that we are pleading.

By mingling sympathetically with many persons. Consider the volume of suggestion in this word "sympathetically." Condescendingly, critically, snobbishly, repulsively, are rather harsh adverbs, but they are none too severe to characterize the mingling of some persons with their fellow beings. Such methods of approach result in nothing but antagonism—only the bad sides and rough angles of human nature are apparent to those who employ them. On the contrary, he who comes among others with a fellow feeling is able to learn many of the secrets of human nature. The author of the following is unknown to the writer, who reproduces it here because it states so well some of the results of approaching people in the right way:

"Considering everything," a man said the other day—and he is a person whose opinions are of value to many—"considering everything, the mistake most people make in life is that they do not see and appreciate enough the daily life of their associates. They are content with knowing one or two

friends of the same class. Human beings are a study of the rarest interest, if only to watch their faces on the street. It is, of course, better to know them, what they think, what they do. Under some old fellow's threadbare coat may beat the most adventuresome spirit in the world. I make it my business never to travel without questioning the porter, the fruit seller or a fellow traveler—sometimes all three. Questions, did I say? I did not mean that; it is no idle curiosity, it is rather an interest in all the changes of God's creation. It is much more exciting than a novel, more romantic than an adventure, and it makes friends. Not long ago I stopped, in passing, and talked to an old woman who was wiping up one of the floors in a public building. It developed that she had once known affluence, but things happened, as they do every day, and she could scrub, so—she scrubbed. She scrubbed with joy. Her face was bright and her hands were willing. I didn't have to go to the battle front to find my hero. She preached a sermon to me in a few min-

utes in which I chatted with her, by the expression in her eyes. I tell you, knowing people is one of the aims of life. I would hate to think I could meet only the successful and the clean, and appreciate their viewpoint! The happiness of each day is measured with me by the number of people with whom I have touched and, in touching, tried to help. The man is a successful man of affairs. Needless to add, every one loves him."—*Selected*.

By comparing notes with others interested in the study of human nature. A group of Christian workers were discussing the question: How may we in church work get along with those whose personalities irritate us? One of the group, a church school superintendent, had just told of a teacher in his school whom he called his file man—a man whose thoughtless words and foolish actions rasped his sensitive nature as a file rasps human flesh. The superintendent explained how by studying this man he had come to appreciate his good points as well

as to know his bad ones, and that it was now a very interesting part of his work to endeavor to help the other workers of the school get along with the file man.

As the narrative proceeded a smile illumined the face of one of the listeners. Upon being questioned as to the cause of his smile, he declared that the story of the file man had recalled his grater man. It was then his turn to explain that without even having heard of the file man, he had designated one of his fellow workers "the grater man," because he grated on his sensibilities. Like the superintendent, by sympathetic study of him he had come so to know "the grater man" that he got along very well with him and was able to induce others to work with him without any serious friction.

These two cases recalled to a third member of the group an experience he had had. There was in the church which he attended a persistent old man who insisted on every possible occasion, fitting or otherwise, on talking on personal religion. A number of the young men connected with the church

held an indignation meeting which resulted in a committee waiting upon the pastor to announce that unless this old man were removed from the church a large number of the young men would remain away from the services. The pastor, wise man that he was, urged the complainants to study the one objected to so as to get acquainted with his viewpoint and thus become sympathetic with him. After some urging the committee promised to do this and reported back to those who had sent them to the pastor. Harmony did not come at once, but a better feeling resulted as the young men became better acquainted with the older one.

On another occasion, several business men were discussing the subject of human nature when one of them broke out vehemently, "I tell you there is as much cussedness in my three-year-old granddaughter as there is in an old canal horse."

The smile of incredulity with which this outburst was received, was answered by another member of the group who said, "That is so, my granddaughter of four is a flaxen-

haired, blue-eyed beauty, who is as sweet looking as the traditional angel, yet she can stamp her foot and yell when asked to do something which she does not wish to do with such a display of temper as proves that she is as stubborn as a canal horse."

"Where does she get this stubbornness?"

"From her maternal grandmother surely, possibly from some of her father's ancestors. At any rate she has inherited a vast amount of human nature, notwithstanding her angelic looks."

The members of the group, now thoroughly engrossed, proceeded to cite instances of the manifestation of undesirable traits of human nature, in many cases seemingly unsuspected by their possessors. One told of an elderly man and wife who constantly accuse each other of doing mean things while neither seems to be conscious of being guilty of the indiscretion for which the other is blamed by his life's partner. A very realistic picture was drawn of a young man, zealous as a Christian worker, who is always complaining that others do not un-

derstand his work and refuse proper co-operation in it, and yet who does not take the least pains to understand his fellow workers and wilfully ignores them when they ask for his coöperation in what ought to be their common work.

So animated did the descriptions of the frailties of human nature become that one present called a halt by exclaiming, "It must be very evident to all of us that the other fellow has an abnormal supply of human nature and that he is not conscious of it, but what can we do to make all this that we have just heard of benefit to us in our service for others?"

Then followed a serious discussion by these intelligent men, who were desirous not only of knowing the truth in regard to human nature, but also of learning how to improve themselves in regard to working with others. They concluded that they must study themselves as well as others in order to be patient and sympathetic with untoward manifestations of human nature, and that they must endeavor to fit themselves

more and more to others instead of trying to conform others to their ways of thinking and acting.

By generalizing results of observations and conversation an interchange of experiences such as the foregoing, followed by intelligent application of the hints given, ought to result not only in the increase of knowledge of human nature, but also in the development of tact in dealing with others. This plan is commended to the Christian worker and more especially urged if it and personal observations made are followed by some serious writing and thinking. There is a much debated question as to the value of written notes. At any rate, notes should never be jotted down in the presence of the one under observation, for that process would so put the observed one on guard that the real person would not be seen. Again when engaged in discussion such as recorded in the foregoing it is much better to give one's self up to the spirit of what is going on than to endeavor to write notes. At the same time the mind may be trained

to take notes which may be recalled later on, jotted down and so arranged that generalizations may be deduced from them. These may be preserved for future use and added to or changed as knowledge of human nature increases. They may be compared with those made by others to the great advantage of all concerned, for human nature is so unstable, elusive and self-contradictory that it cannot be studied from too many viewpoints.

By making allowances for exceptional cases. A caution must be interjected here; namely, it is unwise to generalize hastily or to endeavor to fit all persons into a standard. This is preëminently the age of standardization, but human nature cannot be standardized. Most persons are peculiar in some respects; some persons are odd in many ways; others alternate in exhibitions of good and evil traits; to-day a person may be angelic, to-morrow diabolical. This is what makes the study of human nature so difficult, and discourages so many persons

from trying to be of service to others. To keep from such discouragement one must recall how Jesus kept on in his labors for humanity, notwithstanding the fact that he knew all about human nature. Think of our heavenly Father, who knows all the idiosyncrasies and oddities of his human children and yet is always working for their benefit.

By reading. It is only after one's attention has been called impressively to a particular subject that one is likely to find many references to that study in his ordinary reading. In addition to what comes to him through regular channels of literature, the student of human nature will seek for special information on this subject. This he will find in

(1) **The Bible.** The Bible is a thesaurus of records of human nature. Unlike most other books, it portrays persons just as they are—in their goodness and badness. Jesus dealt with human nature as no other

person has ever dealt with it. The Biblical student, with his mind intent on his subject, may find much not only to increase his knowledge of human nature, but also to indicate how he may successfully cope with it.

(2) **Fiction.** Unlike the Bible fiction is likely to be one-sided or exaggerated in its portrayal of humanity, but to the student who is able to make allowances, a great deal that is helpful may be derived from the proper reading of fiction. Thackeray, Dickens and many other novelists were past masters in the art of visualizing human nature. In such stories as those of Joseph Lincoln and in novels like "Mary Carey" and "Gibbie Gault," the awakened reader will find many hints of value to him in his study of human nature. Many persons are so anxious "to see how the story turns out" that they give little heed to the human nature that is pictured therein. To the student, however, there is much more than the plot and "they ever lived happy thereafter."

(3) **Shakespeare's plays.** Why are the writings of the bard of Avon so varied? Why has he been able appealingly to present so many different characters in such varied guises? It is because he portrays human nature, which is almost limitless in its variations.

(4) **Newspapers and current periodicals.** These publications present to the reader just what he is expecting and what he is able to find in them. The business man, the professional man, the sportsman, the society leader, each finds his portion in the daily press and the monthly magazine. The student of human nature will find in them suggestive helps in this study just as soon as he begins looking for them with a mind sufficiently trained to recognize what he needs to help him in his study.

(5) **Biographies.** As biography is the record of human life, it goes without saying that it teems with material for the alert student of human nature.

(6) **Books yet to be written.** Innumerable are the manuals on child study. The literature on adolescence is increasing rapidly. Books on the study of human nature are few, but they will be written as soon as the necessity for and the value of their study is recognized. It will be well for all of us to watch out for them.

There remain three suggestions to be offered. One is that the reader, wherever he is in a position to do so, insist that human nature be regarded as one of the subjects upon which instruction should be given at conventions and institutes for Christian workers. To consider traits, characteristics or interests of children, youth and adolescence is admirable, but to go deeper and make an especial study of human nature will be better. To say that the ramifications of this subject are so many that it is impossible to study it is about the same as saying that it is useless to study trees, because no two leaves on a tree are exactly alike, or that we should not study astronomy because we cannot learn everything

about Mars or the great nebulæ with which we are just beginning to get acquainted.

Another suggestion already hinted at is that one of the most fruitful methods of increasing one's knowledge of human nature is *by using, for the benefit of others, the knowledge of people already acquired.* This is a truism, for it is well known by every student that the more he uses his knowledge of any subject the greater are his opportunities of increasing that knowledge, for "there is that that scattereth and yet increaseth." It is necessary, however, to keep repeating this truth in reference to human nature, for there are many persons who use their knowledge of humanity for selfish or evil purposes, and many more who are kept from helping others because they discover so much that is repulsive in human nature.

Above every one else *study Jesus*, the greatest Worker as well as the only perfect Example, for he who studies the Master will have an infallible Model after whom he may pattern his own work. When, by contrast-

ing his efforts with the work of the great Teacher, he becomes conscious of his own defects, he may have his Lord's help in overcoming his deficiencies and in going forward to greater teaching ability. Study Jesus as the Model, and if you really desire to improve imitate him as your Example and call upon him as your Helper. This will enable you not merely to know your weak points but, what is of inestimable importance, to learn how to make the most of what you are and what you have of talents and acquirements. Goldsmith's words have been repeated in various forms: "People seldom improve when they have no model but themselves to copy."

V.

SOME RESULTS OF THIS STUDY

HUMILIATION

“I abhor myself”

“Depart from me,” said Peter

Watch yourself go by

SYMPATHY

ALLOWANCE FOR SELF

Self-tolerance

Severe self-judging

SELF-IMPROVEMENT

BETTER TEAM WORK

A baseball player

Misdirection changed

MANIFESTATION OF LOVE

Getting along with others

LONGING FOR THE DIVINE NATURE

This is the supreme result

CON.: WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH HUMAN NATURE?

A TASK THAT IS NOT IMPOSSIBLE

V

SOME RESULTS OF THIS STUDY

To the one who has studied human nature along the lines suggested in preceding chapters there will be **SOME RESULTS**. That he may be prepared to accept them rather than be perplexed by them some of them are here recorded :

Humiliation. This may be one of the very first results coming to the really sincere student of human nature. This humiliation will probably be caused by the revelations accompanying an honest study of self. One of old is represented as going farther than this and saying, "I abhor myself." When Peter saw his poor, frail humanity in contrast with the personality of Jesus Christ, he exclaimed, "Depart from me, O Lord, for I am a sinful man." This humiliation is generally deepened when the realization is reached that the student is about the same

as other people whom he has condemned. The more exhaustive one's studies the keener becomes the conviction that there are very many things in human nature of which no one should be proud. But the real student is a truth-seeker. Therefore disagreeable or self-humiliating discoveries are accepted at their value. He is willing to follow the admonitions and accept the conclusions of the following verses:

WATCH YOURSELF GO BY

Just stand aside and watch yourself go by;
 Think of yourself as "he," instead of "I."
 Note closely as in other men you note
 The bag-kneed trousers and the seedy coat,
 Pick flaws; find fault; forget the man is you,
 And try to make your estimate ring true.
 Confront yourself and look you in the eye,
 Just stand aside and watch yourself go by.

Interpret all your motives just as though
 You looked on one whose aims you did not know.
 Let undisguised contempt surge through you
 when
 You see you shrink, O commonest of men!
 Despise your cowardice; condemn whate'er
 You note of falseness in you anywhere.
 Defend not one defect that shames your eye—
 Just stand aside and watch yourself go by.

And then, with eyes unveiled to what you
loathe—

To sins that with sweet charity you'd clothe—
Back to your self-walled tenement you go

With tolerance for all who dwell below.

The faults of others then will dwarf and shrink;

Love's chain grow stronger by one mighty link—

When you, with "he" as substitute for "I,"

Have stood aside and watched yourself go by.

—*Strickland W. Gillilan*, in "*The Forecast*."

Sympathy. Realizing from a study of self how very human you are and finding how much like your own is the human nature of other people you will sympathize with them. People resent advice, pity or patronage, but sympathy is acceptable to nearly everybody. He who is able to sympathize with his fellows has advanced far on the way to helping them.

Allowances for self. There are too many persons who are so self-tolerant that they are of little use to anybody. Most of their time is occupied with looking out for and taking care of what they call "number one." Whatever religious labels such persons put on themselves they are not followers of him

who forgot self so that he went about doing good. But, on the other hand, there are many excellent persons whose influence for good is impaired by the severity with which they judge themselves. Keenly recognizing their own shortcomings and frailties they refrain from attempting many things they ought to do, because they think they are "not good enough" or "not qualified." The proper study of human nature by such shirking ones should lead them to be more lenient with themselves and to perform such service as they can, even though perfection of character or of skill has not yet been attained.

Self-improvement. The personage who is so busy improving others that he is sarcastically reproached for his own shortcomings is a favorite figure in fiction and caricature. A corrective for this attitude of mind is furnished by the study of human nature. As one becomes better acquainted with himself and others less and less does he criticize those about him and more and more does he

endeavor to improve himself. Above everything else he strives to rid himself of the feeling that he is "as good as so and so" or "better than such a one." His desire is to become better than he once was. Here is a keen competition, not between him and some other mortal whose deficiencies he knows, but between the person he is and the one he wishes to become. This is a healthy exercise and if continued long enough results in great self-improvement.

Better team work. When Will was fifteen years old he caused the baseball team of which he was a member to lose many games because he always insisted on being catcher. He is thirty now and never catches when the team is playing a match game but plays shortstop and thus contributes to the many victories with which his team is credited. Why the change? Will has so studied himself and others that he knows he cannot catch as well as Tom catches and that he can play shortstop with high efficiency. Hence, for the sake of the team, he

wants Tom to be catcher and he is willing to play the position in which he can render the best service. One of the saddest commentaries on Christian work is that there are so many misfits. Apparently zealous, indefatigable workers are accomplishing little or nothing for the advancement of the Kingdom or the welfare of mankind because they are endeavoring to fill other persons' positions while the work for which they are fitted is ignored.

This misdirection is changed for the one who studies human nature to good purpose. Self, including both ability and disability, is better understood. Other persons are better known and appreciated, so that there is less jealousy, friction and repulsion. Understanding of self and others leads to mutual concession, harmony and the willingness to do what is for the good of all. Like the baseball team, which has every man playing the position for which he is best fitted, the workers we are describing will do their best for the common good rather than insist on working in accordance with per-

sonal prejudices or preferences. "That will be heaven!" some one interposes. Yes, indeed, but is it not the business of the Christian to bring heaven to earth just as quickly and as fully as possible? Such a state of affairs will be all the more hastened by the one who uses his knowledge of human nature for the good of all and is willing to receive from God that grace which enables him in honor to prefer others.

Manifestations of love. Mistakes abound because Christian workers misjudge one another. Workers are sometimes swayed by prejudice or passion rather than by judgment. Projects for the advancement of the Kingdom, some of them small, others mighty—have been brought to a standstill by those who ought to be pushing them, insisting on their rights. And what is at the base of these hindrances? Many things perhaps but nothing more continuously nor more palpably than ignorance of self and of other persons. This ignorance is removed by knowledge of human nature.

It is quite the custom to talk about love as the dominant force in the world and to indicate what would result if love held sway. We are all trying to bring in the blessed era of the dominance of love. Perhaps we have been working at the wrong end of the problem—the Divine end—while the loving Father has been endeavoring to get us to begin by reversing our judgment of self and of others. In this connection the following is very suggestive:

“Of course we would get along with people if they were always as reasonable and fair-minded and compatible as they ought to be. The reason why we have any trouble is that the other folks are cranky or ‘set’ or self-assertive or something else that really demands that we oppose them or hold out against them or set them down where they belong. It is only in the interests of justice, or through absolute necessity, or that these most unreasonable people should be taught a lesson that we refuse to get along with them on terms of friendliness and fellowship. At least that is the way we

tell the story. Well, suppose it is true. Suppose that every last one of the people that we have not been able to get along with are impossible cranks or absolutely cantankerous mortals, perhaps we ought to get along with them still on real terms of amiability. Perhaps that charming grace of good-fellowship should be able to match itself to even a situation of that kind. Perhaps it should, nay, we will go even farther than that and say that in many cases it absolutely should, without any question. To get along with people, even unfair and unreasonable people, is a Christian thing to do, and therefore we ought to be able to do it. But the chances are against the trouble, or the cause of the trouble, all being on one side. . . . But whether it is our fault or some one else's fault, there are too many of us who are not on as good terms with life and with the people who live around us with whom we have to do as we ought to be. The iconoclast and the knocker no doubt serve some useful purpose in life upon occasion, but there are altogether too many of him,

and the man of the opposite type does vastly more permanent and far-reaching good than he does. If we get on with people on more intimate and friendly and coöperative terms many of us would have a vastly greater influence for good than we do have. And we would get a great deal more of happiness and satisfaction out of life as well."—*The Christian Guardian*.

Will there not be less fault ascribed on both sides when we know ourselves and others better? How will this knowledge come except through that study for which we are pleading and through the incoming of light accompanying the reception of *the* Light into our lives?

Longing for the Divine nature. This is the supreme and therefore the most-to-be-desired result of the study of human nature. He who comes to know mankind—including himself—will surely realize that there is something better than human nature. As a Christian he will naturally think of the only perfect human being—Jesus of Naza-

reth. He will go farther in his thinking and conclude that Jesus was what he was, not because of his humanity but because of his Divine nature. Then if he will ask the Holy Spirit to take the things of Christ and show them unto him, he will be directed to the fifteenth chapter of the Gospel according to St. John, where he will read that he may bring forth the right fruits by allowing Christ to abide in him as he abides in Christ. The practical application of the Allegory of the Vine and Branches in Christian work would obviate many of its present difficulties and lead to much longed-for but as yet unattained results.

Let us, then, face calmly and courageously this ever-recurring question: What shall we do with human nature? It is foolish to say that it must be driven out. This is impossible. "Can the leopard change his spots?" He who undertakes to subdue his human nature will have a more difficult task than Jacob had at Peniel. Is there no hope, then? Will all this study that has been urged so earnestly but lead the student to

the conclusion that there is much of both good and bad in human nature? Not if he is willing to be led by the Spirit, who will teach him that while human nature is not to be driven out it may be dominated by the Divine nature. This is the consummation not only to be hoped for but to be prayed and worked for. *Whittier* advises:

“Search thine own heart. What paineth thee
In others, in thyself may be;
All dust is frail, all flesh is weak;
Be thou the true man thou dost seek.”

This is excellent advice to the student of human nature which we have been giving in various forms, but does it go far enough? Have we not lamented over and over again that we have fallen far short of our ideal for ourselves? Have we not like Paul of old often been obliged to confess that we have been defeated by the evil (human nature) within us? Paul allowed the Divine to rule in his mortal body and became a mighty agent for service for others. Jacob, the selfish, scheming Jacob, who has so many descendants to-day, became Israel the

prince with God when he allowed the Divine to dominate the human. Poor human Peter so afraid of a maid that he denied his Master with cursing became the courageous preacher of Pentecost who fearlessly faced the multitude while he testified for that same Master. The difference was simply that in one instance he was controlled by his human nature and in the other case he was dominated by the Divine nature. It is all so simple that the wonder of it is that we have not learned the lesson. But we are dull pupils. Lord, increase our faith.

Have we not set ourselves an impossible task? No, not impossible, but one to which one must set himself with his whole heart, patiently and perseveringly, for this labor does not promise easy or quick returns. We smile with pity as we read of the scholar who is reported to have said on his death-bed that he regretted not having spent his life in studying the dative case. Lately a lecturer on botany said, "One could spend his whole life in the study of lichens alone and still there would be a beyond." A

whole life spent in the study of the dative case or in the study of botany! Marvelous is the devotion of secular scholarship! Shall the Christian grudge time spent in the study of self and other persons? especially as that study fits him for better service for others and ought to lead him to a longing for that life which comes from above and is manifested in helpfulness to others.

VI

AXIOMS CONCERNING HUMAN NATURE

INT.: THE MIRROR, NOT THE MICROSCOPE

NO TWO HUMAN BEINGS ARE ALIKE

People cannot be standardized
All persons cannot be dealt with in
the same way

NO PERSON IS THE SAME AT ALL TIMES

Great allowance must be made for this
fact
Appropriate time and method

NO PERSON IS THE SAME TO ALL OTHER PERSONS

One worker fails, another succeeds
One may present truth where another cannot

AS OTHERS APPEAR TO ME, I MAY APPEAR TO
THEM

A soldier in France

IMPERFECTIONS OF OTHERS ARE VERY REAL

Henderson's guile
A Pennsylvania boy
A wise old clergyman
A setback in a church school

CON.: THE PATIENCE OF GOD

VI

AXIOMS CONCERNING HUMAN NATURE

FOR the Christian worker of great importance is the injunction: "Better use the mirror for self than the microscope for others." He who really examines himself and uses his brains after the scrutiny will have little inclination to subject others to a microscopic examination. It is one of the perversities of human nature to perceive clearly in others those things which cannot be seen in oneself. The object of this study is to help the student examine himself rather than others.

Another discouraging feature seemingly inherent in man is that even when the facts concerning himself are so patent that he cannot by any possibility shut his eyes to them, he has all sorts of explanations of and excuses for his own shortcomings, while both in speech and action he magnifies de-

fects in others. Natural as these things are they should be overcome by the Christian worker who amounts to nothing unless he is able to work with and for folks who are as human as himself.

Suggestions are here made, which if acted upon will lead to other thoughts, which may do much in helping the thoughtful student to work with more power because of the reduction of that friction which interferes so disastrously with the advancement of God's cause in the world.

In estimating ourselves and others let us keep in mind the following facts:

NO TWO HUMAN BEINGS ARE ALIKE. Almost infinite as is the variety in nature, it is no greater than in human nature. Grasping this truth, we shall conclude that

People cannot be standardized. In the reach after economy in production and replacement, enormous strides have been made in industry by the standardization of articles of every-day use. All attempts along

these lines in regard to humanity have not only proven failures but they are seen to be impossibilities. Hence we come to another very practical conclusion :

All persons cannot be dealt with in the same way. The value of this conclusion is especially great in two connections :

We must make much of personal peculiarities if we are to be of any service to people. A man of great natural ability, profound knowledge of the Bible, and a rich spiritual experience made a miserable failure of his attempts to benefit others because he imagined that God would deal with every person just as he had dealt with him. In other words, he made the mistake of supposing that human beings are alike.

Differences in our fellow workers must be reckoned with. It is just here that one of the most serious drawbacks to Christian service is encountered ; in all planning much allowance must be made for personal differences. On the other hand, these very differences are of immense advantage in the

work of the Kingdom, for there are various kinds of tools which the King may employ in his beneficent work for mankind.

That keen student of human nature, *H. Addington Bruce*, has this to say on the value of perceiving distinctions in those with whom we deal:

“A not uncommon cause for failure to make headway in business or professional life is forgetfulness of the fact that no two persons are precisely alike in their modes of thinking and behaving.

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“Of course, some men naturally are keener than others in perceiving distinctions between the persons they have to meet for business purposes. And many are singularly deficient in this respect, though usually not from weakness in intelligence so much as from neglect to make any real effort to perceive distinctions.

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“Even such matters as differences in posture, in gesture, in vocal expression, will repay careful observation. They are sig-

nificant of inner differences which, from a business point of view, it may be of great importance to perceive."

If perception of and reckoning with differences are necessary on the part of the business man, much more should they be taken into account by the Christian worker who must appeal to other than selfish interests.

NO PERSON IS THE SAME AT ALL TIMES. Not only must great allowances be made for differences in individualities, but the same individual cannot always be relied upon because he differs so from time to time.

Mr. A. is a Christian worker of unquestioned devotion to the cause of Christ, but he has provoked unmeasured irritation and aroused unallayed ill feeling because of his varying moods. One who has studied him knows just how to get along with him because he not only appreciates his variations but also acts in accordance therewith. Mr. A. is typical of those workers who are valuable because they develop patience in their

fellows. As he is quoted as a specimen, we may conclude

In getting along with our fellow workers for God, great allowance must be made for the fact that the same persons differ greatly from time to time. In the measure that one is prepared to make such allowances will he succeed in that most desirable quality of being able to work with others.

In presenting truth to others, care must be taken as to the appropriate time and method of presentation. A person will accept readily at one time what he will reject angrily at another time. A method perfectly adaptable now may prove a complete failure at another time and *vice versa*.

NO PERSON IS THE SAME TO ALL OTHER PERSONS. An enthusiastic Christian woman was shunned by most of her acquaintances and dreaded by many of them because of idiosyncrasies. One who had taken a long course in the study of human nature was accused of toadying to this

woman because he got along so well with her. He was able not only to refute this charge but also to prove to the satisfaction of those who turned from the queer one that to him she was an entirely different person from what she was to them, for he recognized in her qualities which by them had remained undiscovered. This student of human nature was able not only to work in harmony with the so-called peculiar woman but also to persuade others to coöperate with her when he disclosed to them her many admirable characteristics which had been overshadowed by traits not so commendable.

Conclusions from these facts are of the utmost importance to the worker who wishes to show himself approved of God. Here are two :

Where one worker fails another may make a great success. As unselfishness is a primal requisite in Christian service, it should make no difference who does the work as long as it is done. Hence a study

as to who may work better than another, or who may best influence this or that one, results in getting work done that would be impossible if there were an adherence to the fallacy that a person is the same to all other persons.

One person may be able to present truth to an individual who would not respond to another teacher. In this respect then, is grave danger of emphasizing *my*, however admirable that emphasis may be in other connections. This is not *my* school, *my* class nor *my* pupil. The school, the class, the individual belong to God. The unselfish worker should say, If I can teach and influence them, I shall rejoice; if I cannot do all I wish to do with and for them, I shall rejoice just as heartily at another's success, for I know that God has many agents to use in his work with perverse human nature. No selfishness on my part will interfere with the progress of the Kingdom of God.

AS OTHERS APPEAR TO ME, I MAY APPEAR TO THEM. This most necessary

statement is aptly illustrated by the account given in the *New York Times* of the calming of an angry American soldier in Paris, who in his indignation at others, had no idea of how ridiculous he appeared in their sight:

He was spluttering with the helpless indignation of the man who wants to tell folks what he thinks of them and can't pronounce the words when he came into the Y. M. C. A. headquarters. Two gendarmes with ferocious mustaches and friendly eyes shepherded him into the room.

"L'Americaïn," they announced, simply, and turned away with the air of those who have done their duty. They had learned that the Y. M. C. A. would always look after the American soldier in France.

"What's the matter?" asked the Secretary.

"Matter? There ain't anything the matter with me," said the soldier angrily. "You better ask them policemen what's the matter with them. Say, they couldn't hold down a job ten minutes in New York. They can't even talk—just make noises."

"What did you want to talk to them about?" inquired the Y. M. C. A. man.

"Oh, I just wanted to ask the way back to the station, that's all. I left my rifle and my pack in the corner, and came up to see Paris. Now I've got to go back to catch my train."

"Where do you live back home?" asked the Y. M. C. A. man.

"Brooklyn," said the American soldier.

"I'll just telephone and find out where you left your rifle and your pack," said the Y. M. C. A. man.

A few minutes later he was ready with the information, and with directions for getting "back to the station."

"Thanks," said the American. "I sure am much obliged. But say, Paris is a funny place, ain't it? A little cleaner than New York, maybe, but, say, I'd rather be a wart on the nose of the Goddess of Liberty than the whole Eiffel Tower."

He turned abruptly and went out.

Should a teacher wish to learn how obtuse he is, let him listen to his pupils as

they express their opinion of him when they think he is not listening. The instructor may have a very decided opinion of the defects of those whom he instructs, but it is no more decided than is the students' knowledge of similar frailties existing in the personality of their teacher.

ONE IS RARELY AWARE OF HIS OWN IMPERFECTION; IMPERFECTIONS OF OTHERS ARE VERY REAL TO HIM. The Christian worker may know full well wherein others are lacking without manifesting any consciousness of similar defects in his own make-up. This fact is well illustrated by *William H. Leach* in his article in *The Continent* entitled Henderson's Guile.

Henderson, who was always in his pew on Sunday morning, requested his pastor to preach a sermon that "would make a woman see the sinfulness of constantly heckling and taunting a good-intentioned and honest man."

"Have you some one in mind?" the minister asked.

“It is Mrs. Henderson,” he replied. “She is at me all the time. It is ‘Alex, why don’t you do this?’ or, ‘Alex, why don’t you do that?’ And it is always ‘Where has the money gone to this week? I wanted to buy the baby some shoes but there is no money.’ She never thinks that a man has a life to live. I invested some money in oil wells. It’s true we haven’t gotten anything yet. But she makes my life miserable. I wish you would preach a sermon which would make her stop. You know the Bible says, ‘Wives, be in subjection to your husbands.’ That certainly doesn’t mean nagging them all the time.”

By a strange coincident the sermon planned by the minister for the following Sunday morning was just on this line, but, alas! when the day came Henderson was kept at home suffering from a bad cold. Mrs. Henderson, however, heard the sermon with interest, missing not a word, and smiled as the preacher pictured the tragedies which followed the tauntings and hecklings of home life.

After the service she waited alone to speak to the preacher. Sermons sometimes get quick results like that, but not often.

Mrs. Henderson took his hand which was cold with guilt. But if the words had accomplished their purpose it was a deed well done.

"It was a splendid sermon, pastor," she said. "I have but one regret—Alex was not here. I wish he could have heard it. It would have done him so much good. Couldn't you preach it over again next Sunday?"

The Woman Who Sees narrates the following in *The Sun*:

The woman took the little Pennsylvania German boy, brought up on the farm his ancestors had tilled for some two hundred years, into the city's most luxurious and pompous fruit shop. At the theatre, in taxis or the subway, before going to bed at night, he had wanted nothing but oranges, more and more oranges. For, true to an age-long inheritance of frugality, the boy's father allowed no fruit on the table at home

but apples from the farm. So the woman, with an indulgent heart, planned to give the boy a feast of oranges.

The boy made his choice from the tiers of fruit, golden, rich, luscious, and then he spoke for the first time.

"Put them in a toot," he said to the clerk.

The clerk raised expressive eyebrows.

"In a what?"

"Toot—you know—toot."

The clerk raised both arms in a Latin gesture of despair.

The boy tried shouting: "A toot!"

Then, as if to make it all clear as anything could be clear:

"I mean a poke."

The woman laughingly interfered.

"He wants a paper bag."

As they reached the sidewalk the boy looked back at the store with consummate contempt.

"Wouldn't these dumb foreigners," he burst out, "greistel you!"

There is a tradition to the effect that a wise old clergyman, after he had performed

a marriage ceremony, addressing the happy bride and groom would say, "You must allow two bears to abide in your home." To the questioning looks of the couple he would reply, "The two bears are bear and forbear." He would then go on to explain that each would have to endure much from the other because of the frailties of human nature and that the only way to have happiness in the home would be by bearing the burdens of each other and forbearing to censure or upbraid when imperfections became evident.

Do you know a successful Christian worker? He has learned to bear and forbear. He must endure not only the shortcomings and aggressions of others but also his own. Jesus has left on record the statement: The children of this world are wiser in their day and generation than the children of light. For confirmation of this truth, watch the astute politician or the successful business man; note how much he bears for the sake of his policies or his business. Shall we who are engaged in the best

work in the world be outdone by those who are working for less noble ends?

Everything was moving rapidly forward toward the success of the movement for putting the church school on the front line, when there was a decided setback because one of the most enthusiastic promoters of the plan forgot herself and used stinging words of reproof. True she could justify herself by pointing to provocation on the part of those who had become hinderers instead of helpers. But what did she accomplish by her manifestation of irritation? Much that was hurtful to the cause she had at heart; nothing that was really helpful. She did not forbear; too late she realized the evil wrought by her lack of forbearance.

This, then, is the sum of the thought of this chapter: He who would be a worker with God must not only know the imperfections of human nature but must so bear with them that he forbears saying or doing those things that will keep others from working with him.

“I often wonder how the Lord stands us

human beings," said a Christian woman. He does stand us. Think of his patience! It is no wonder that the Psalmist exclaimed, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him!" God knows man, his meannesses, his frailties, his imperfections, also his longings, his nobleness, the great possibilities that are within him. Because he knows man so well, he makes allowances for him, he is mindful of him; more than that he has chosen him to be his fellow-laborer for the accomplishment of his purposes for mankind. As Christian workers let us not only know ourselves and others, but let us also make such allowances as will enable us not only to work with the Lord, but also with those with whom he works.

VII

PEOPLE ON STILTS

INT.: STILT-WALKING IN RUSSIA
SOME WITH WHOM WE MAY GET ALONG

PERSONS WHO ARE ILL
Work done by cripples
Illness exploited

OVER-NICE PEOPLE
Too fine for earth
The remedy

OVER-SENSITIVE PEOPLE
Sensitiveness is selfishness

PROUD PEOPLE
“Pride the over-weening vice”

PEOPLE WHO DEMAND THEIR RIGHTS
The claims of the Kingdom of God

EASILY-OFFENDED PEOPLE
Jesus the Example

MY-MIND-IS-MADE-UP PERSONS
A good thing
A bad thing
A suggested remedy

THE DIFFERENT-FROM-ANYBODY-ELSE PERSON
No two individuals are exactly alike
Individual dealing necessary

CON.: SIN
Consciousness of needed
The conversion of Saul of Tarsus

VII

PEOPLE ON STILTS

“SYLVAIN DORNON of the Landes, France, once performed the great feat of walking on stilts from Paris to Moscow in fifty-eight days. In Russia stilt-walking was unknown, and great crowds were attracted by the novel way of walking. For more than one hundred years the shepherds of the Landes have been the most famous of stilt-walkers. They not only make great distances, but run at great speed, and stilt races have long been common at merry makings in that section. Although the stilts are strapped to their legs, they perform many feats, such as picking up a pebble from the ground, plucking a flower, simulating a fall and quickly rising again, etc. The stilts are pieces of wood about five feet in length, provided with a shoulder and strap to support the foot. The upper part of the wood is

flattened and rests against the leg, where it is held by a strong strap. The lower part, that which rests upon the earth, is enlarged, and is sometimes strengthened with a sharp bone. The shepherd is provided with a staff, which he uses for getting on to the stilts, and as a crook for directing his flocks. Again, being provided with a board, the staff constitutes a comfortable seat, adapted to the height of the stilts. Resting in this manner, the shepherd seems to be upon a gigantic tripod. When he stops, he knits or spins, with the distaff thrust in his girdle. Mounted on these stilts, the shepherds of the Landes drive their flocks across the wastes, going through bushes, brush and pools of water, and traversing marshes with safety. Moreover, this elevation permits them to easily watch their sheep, which are often scattered over a wide surface. The sheep of the Landes' marshes are a poor breed, with coarse wool. The inhabitants of this part of the country are very poor and rude, but hard workers, good-natured and hospitable. In 1789, by direction of the

Minister Neckar, large plantations of fir and cork trees were made, to better their condition, and they find occupation in charcoal burning, cork cutting and collecting turpentine, resin and pitch. They also manufacture sabots or wooden shoes.”—*Author unknown.*

The foregoing reminds us pertinently that we who deal with human nature in the church work and elsewhere have much to do with people on stilts. It would be in vain for us to recall this fact and all the consequences connected therewith, if we did not seek some methods of getting on well with stilted folk so that even they may be made agents in the advancement of the Kingdom of God.

HERE ARE SOME OF THOSE WITH WHOM WE MAY GET ALONG:

Persons who are ill. Some one has made the statement that three-quarters of the work of the Kingdom of God is done by cripples; that is to say, by persons who are

physically below par. All honor to those who bravely and courageously face their work despite the handicap of illness or pain! With such we must not only be sympathetic but also try to fulfill the law of Christ by bearing their burdens as well as our own.

On the other hand, there are many people who exploit their illness. They are constantly talking about it, making much of it, nursing it, coddling it. Both psychologists and physicians tell us in unmeasured terms that such persons would be better off were they to forget their ills and buckle down to self-sacrificing service for others. Just how to bring about this happy consummation is most difficult to determine, for, like every manifestation of human nature, the innumerable varieties of illnesses that put people upon stilts make them very difficult to get along with. Perhaps a quiet talk with such persons about God's love to us or what Christ has done for us might be of value. A reference to Paul's patient continuance in well-doing might be of advantage. His thorn in the flesh did not put him on stilts

but helped to keep him humble, so that God's grace was sufficient for him as it will be for any one who will allow himself to become partaker thereof.

Over-nice people. There are people who are so fine in their own estimation that they never descend to earth. It is very difficult to get along with them, for they look with contempt on common folk. Occasionally such a one becomes a worker for God and then there is difficulty in whatever circle he moves. There is no remedy for this kind of stiltiness except in bringing such a one face to face and heart to heart with him who had compassion on the multitude and who was heard gladly by the common people because he loved them.

Over-sensitive people. Some one has defined sensitiveness as selfishness. We will not be particular in forcing an acceptance of this definition, for it is difficult to make a definition that includes everything. It might be profitable to the over-sensitive per-

son really to discover what his sensitiveness is based in or upon. It is quite probable that in many cases it will be found to be rooted in selfishness. The remedy, of course, for sensitiveness is to get the one who suffers from it interested in work for others. How this may be done depends largely upon one's knowledge of the individual to be dealt with. In our articles on human nature we have already given many hints in this direction.

Proud people. The one who is proud is very likely to get up on the very longest possible stilts. We have been told that "pride is the over-weening vice of fools," but that does not help us any except to give us a starting point based on the acceptance of the truth that pride is foolishness growing out of misconception. Again the remedy for this kind of standoffishness is in bringing the one afflicted by it to the King of glory, who humbled himself, became the servant of man and showed what may be done when one humbles one's self as he did.

All this may seem rather strange talk to the proud person but what else is there to offer him? He has made up his mind as to what other people are and as to what he is. Therefore, very little is gained in the effort to make a comparison between him and others. Much may be attained by letting him see where he stands in reference to him who left the glories of the land beyond in order that he might serve people here.

People who are always demanding their rights. Such people are met everywhere and are sources of great annoyance in all departments of Christian work, for they generally fail to put the work above personal prejudices. It is true that we all have certain rights but it is equally true that he who demands his rights will do little for the advancement of the Kingdom of God, especially in the work of the church school where so much depends on volunteer service. If we were to argue with one who is looking for his rights by telling him that others have rights which he ought to accept, little

effect would be produced. There is a time coming when such persons will be obliged to acknowledge the rights of him who can demand their allegiance and obedience. That time, however, has not yet arrived. In the meanwhile it might be of avail to show the person who thinks only of his rights the claim of the Kingdom upon him; to show him that he has nothing for which he is not indebted to God and that if God were to insist on his rights the individual would have no standing place.

Easily-offended people. Just what the cause of the offense may be it is sometimes easy to determine. Any of the causes quoted in the foregoing may be a reason for the offense. There may be other reasons. It remains as a fact so patent that every one who has to do with Christian workers feels the force of it that there are many persons so touchy that it is almost impossible to get along with them. We often wonder why such people dare volunteer in the service of him who was the meek and lowly

Jesus, so lacking in sensitiveness that no one could deter him from his work. Not even the most virulent abuse and bitter persecution could keep him from doing what he had come to earth to do, namely, fulfill the Father's will. If we could get the easily-offended person to take Jesus Christ as his Example not merely in theory but in actual practice the cause of offense would disappear even as the fog goes when the autumn sun casts its healing beams over the landscape.

My-mind-is-made-up persons. It is a good thing to have a mind and to make it up, for there are many Christian workers who seem to act as if they left their minds outside the realm of service for Christ. But it is a very bad thing to make up one's mind and to be unwilling to change it. If there is no other reason than ignorance for the made-up-mind person to be on stilts the very best treatment for him will be to give him more information. The mind is made up because of facts that have been presented to

it or because of prejudices that have been nurtured. The presentation of more facts to a reasonable person leads that one to change his mind. We who have to deal with human nature should be very careful, first that our statements are based on facts and secondly that these facts are applicable to the matters under consideration. Careful calm presentation of facts ought to result in many persons descending from stilts and walking the solid ground of our every-day routine of Christian service.

Years ago a young superintendent took up the work of an older man who had been eminently successful in reorganizing and developing a mediocre Sunday school which grew by degrees into a first class one. Among this older superintendent's teachers was a lady who had made up her mind that anything the new superintendent did was wrong if it did not exactly agree with what his predecessor had been accustomed to suggest. As this determined lady was a most valuable worker it would have been folly to antagonize her. After very careful, prayer-

ful consideration the conclusion was reached that she had received a great deal of information from her former superintendent but had failed to keep up with the times and therefore needed new and different information. In order that she might receive such it was arranged that she should go to a state convention of church school workers, listen to what was said there, come home and report to the teachers of the local school what she had heard. This she did with an accuracy and an enthusiasm which were truly encouraging, but there was something more than a report. From the time of her three days' education at the convention she became the loyal ally of the new superintendent, for she had learned that many of the things that he was proposing were not suggested because he wished them to be done but because they were the things that ought to be done as being in harmony with the progress of the times. More information helped the stubborn teacher to become a pliable coöperator in all that was attempted.

The different-from-anybody-else person.

It is true that there are no two individuals exactly alike; we all differ one from another. These differences should lead us to employ our varied talents in the work of the Kingdom.

To refuse to coöperate with others because one differs from them is sheer folly. What shall be done with the one who acts thus? Find out what he can best do and endeavor to get him to do that particular thing to the utmost of his ability while he loyally coöperates with others, is easier said than done but it has been done. There is no superintendent who is successfully directing the work of a church school who could not cite instance after instance of these people who are so different but who are happily engaged in the work of the Kingdom as represented by the school. It is just in dealing with such persons that one's knowledge of human nature comes in. To give specific rules or exact formulæ would be worse than useless. Individual work and individual dealing is what will lead a different-from-

others person to see how what he has may be made contributory to the general good.

Sin. The writer has hesitated long before writing this word. It is an ugly word, not much heard to-day in polite circles. From a very extended experience with human nature he has come to the conclusion that there are many persons upon stilts because of their sin. They think that their aloofness, their separateness from others, will be a cloak for their sin. Over and over again in his dealing with people there have been found those who have come down from their stilts just as soon as they were lead to recognize that God for Christ's sake forgives sin; that the only thing that can keep one from God's presence is sin; that there is nothing so destructive to the advance of the Kingdom as sin. Here again, as in the foregoing, comes the question: How shall individuals be dealt with? The answer is: As individuals and according to their particular sins. It is very easy to talk about sin in general; it is most difficult to get one to ac-

knowledge sin in particular. The great impetus that came to the work of the early church through the conversion of Saul of Tarsus resulted from his consciousness of personal sin. This consciousness deepened as Paul the teacher went forward in his work. Here is a hint for us who have to deal with human nature. Endless help is necessary but it is available for him who is really interested in the work of the Kingdom to the degree that he is willing to help his brother see himself in order that he may come into fellowship with and through Jesus Christ and thus descend from his stilts and become a humble, loyal follower of him who came to give his life that we might live.

VIII

THE TACTFUL WORKER

INT.: ILLUSTRATIONS OF TACT

A tactful missionary
Wesley's tact

FACTORS IN TACT

KNOWLEDGE

Gained from books
Gained from observation
Gained through study of self

IMAGINATION

Absolutely without imagination
Put yourself in his place

SYMPATHY

The dog and a bone
A fellow feeling

JUSTICE

Unjust persons
An unjust teacher

UNSELFISHNESS

A young salesman
Jesus our Example

LOVE

Beautiful roses
What love is and does
Learning to love

CON.: STUDY BUT DO NOT IMITATE OTHERS

VIII

THE TACTFUL WORKER

It is not difficult to get definitions of tact. Here are a few of them: touch; feeling; sensitive mental perception; nice discernment of the best course of action under given conditions; peculiar ability to deal with others without giving offense.

Better, perhaps, than definitions are illustrations of what tact will enable Christian workers to do. Here are three such illustrations:

This one is given by *L. W. Mudge* in *American Messenger*:

Among my friends there is a missionary who is remarkable for his skill and tact in dealing with individual cases. At one time a Christian master of a large carpenter shop sought his services in behalf of his foreman.

"He is profane, a scoffer and a skeptic," he said. "I cannot do anything with him;

and I cannot get along without him, he is such an excellent workman."

The missionary promised to see what he could do. Frequently he visited the shop, speaking to one and another of the journey-men, but sedulously avoiding the foreman, until his curiosity was thoroughly aroused. At last the opportunity he waited for came. Seeing the foreman one day squinting along a board to see if it was straight, the skill and tact of the missionary seized upon the occasion.

Stepping up to the workman he said:

"Now is not that strange, that a man with two good eyes can see better with one?"

With a hearty laugh the foreman answered, "Well, I never thought of that, but it is true sometimes."

"Yes, it is true; and that reminds me of a verse in the Bible, 'If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light, but if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness.' I guess you'd better think of *that*," and the missionary left him.

However, the wedge was in, the workman's respect was won, and his mind set to thinking. As he said afterward, he could never run his eye along a board without the words coming to mind, and an inquiry as to their meaning. Slowly and patiently the missionary followed up his advantage, until at last the heart yielded, and the scoffer became a humble but zealous follower of Christ. The last I heard of him, some years ago, he was a faithful steward in a church and superintendent of the Sunday school.

The author of the following is unknown to the writer. Perhaps it would need a person as fearless as the great Wesley to be tactful just as this narrative pictures him:

“John Wesley once started a Sunday school in Savannah, Ga., and a good many of the boys and girls came to the school barefooted because they were too poor to have shoes. But there were some rich families whose children wore shoes and stockings, and they said uncomfortable things about the ones whose feet were bare. And so Mr. Wesley set himself to invent a

method of stopping all the talk, and yet not to do any harm to his Sunday school. He finally hit on a plan, and the next Sunday imagine the surprise of teachers and scholars to see their preacher walk into their midst softly, with bare, clean, white feet. One can fancy that those who wore shoes drew their feet back under the benches, and the barefooted ones, conscious of being in good company, sat very straight and looked satisfied and happy. When it came Mr. Wesley's time to talk to the school, he spoke of the fearfully and wonderfully made human body; and, placing his foot on a chair, gave a list of the bones, tendons and joints, and many other interesting facts about the foot. He told the school that no human being could possibly make a piece of machinery as marvelous as the foot. He remarked further, that all the clothing we had to wear, while often necessary, was a hindrance to our usefulness. He called attention to the clumsiness and ugliness of shoes and stockings as compared with the natural foot, with its white and pink color-

ing, the blue veins showing through, and each toe protected by a beautiful, transparent shell, that we call a nail. Even the tan on the feet of children spoke of the goodness and kindness of the Creator. This tan was made by the great sun and the soft, odorous winds. And so Mr. Wesley's invention silenced all the gossip, scattered the hard feelings to the winds, and gave the school a very interesting address."

Turn to the Gospel according to John. Read very carefully, as if it were a new story, chapter 4, through the forty-second verse. Here is an illustration of tact well worthy the study of every teacher who desires to be like the great Teacher.

But even definitions and illustrations are not sufficient for him who honestly asks, How may I become a tactful worker? The emphasis on this question should be placed on the word "become," for it is possible for one who really wishes to do so to become a tactful teacher. Therefore, with the thought in view that he who tries may develop in this direction, it will be helpful to

consider some of the OUTSTANDING FACTORS WHICH MAKE UP THE PERSONALITY OF THE ONE WE CALL TACTFUL:

Knowledge. The more one knows of others, of conditions and of possible results, the better able that one is to deal with a particular situation. Therefore, to be tactful one has to be constantly gaining knowledge of persons and events, for in this world, always, everything is in a state of flux. Knowledge gained through books is good, but not sufficient; knowledge gained through observation of actual persons and present-day events is better; knowledge of one's self and what one is likely to think, say or do under any given circumstance is, perhaps, the best of all, for people are very much the same; what one is likely to do others probably will do also. Hence a knowledge of self is of prime importance to the teacher who is really endeavoring to become tactful. If to this is added knowledge of others and familiarity with movements, the

one who knows has laid an enduring foundation upon which to base that discrimination without which there can be no real tactfulness.

Imagination. Characterizing one who is noted for his tactfulness, this verdict was given: "He is absolutely without imagination." The judgment seemed to be harsh and quite unjust, but on close analysis it was found to be true. The blunderer, who is always getting himself into trouble, although he means well, is without the ability to imagine what people would do under given circumstances. There are many like him who would do good, but are constantly doing harm because of lack of imagination. Of course again the element of knowledge enters, for the more one knows of what has been done the more likely one is to be able to imagine what may be done. Again self-examination is helpful, for what the worker has done is what he is likely to do again, and what he may do is what others may do. Therefore, "put yourself in his place in im-

agination," is a splendid motto for him who wishes to develop in tactfulness. He who cultivates his imagination has taken many steps toward being tactful.

Sympathy. It is not necessary to discuss the difference between pity and sympathy. It is quite generally acknowledged that few persons like to be pitied. There are, however, fewer still who will resent genuine sympathy, which is feeling with another. He who can feel with another is less likely to offend that one by word or deed than is he who cannot put himself in the other's place. Moreover, he who can feel with another is very apt to come to some degree of self-restraint before uttering the word or doing the act that will give the offense. "Tact is little more than sympathetically applied knowledge," writes one who has gone into this subject with the mind and the heart of a philosopher. The following is printed in *The Christian Register* as an example of perfect sympathy: A man was leading a dog by a chain. The dog had a big bone in his

mouth, and dropped it. He strained at the chain in the effort to recover the bone, but the man dragged him on relentlessly. A little ragged girl, playing in the street, observed the dog's difficulty, picked up the bone, ran after the dog, and restored to him his property.

Why could the poor girl sympathize with the dog? Was it not because she *knew* what it was to be hungry? Was it not because she *knew* what a bone meant to a hungry dog? The larger one's experience is, the more one knows how others feel; the more one knows, the more one can sympathize. Every hardship, every disappointment, every defeated ambition, every suffering, every sorrow, every pleasure, every success, every joy, could be made a rich blessing if it were received and accepted as a preparation for sympathizing with others. For then will it be true that "a fellow feeling makes one wondrous kind."

Justice. There are some persons who pride themselves on their tactfulness, who

are unjust. They make friends easily because of their suave manner, pleasant words, hearty commendation of others and seeming willingness to be patient under difficulties. When, however, it comes to the real pinch they are unjust. For example, a difficult problem confronts a number of persons. They are called together for conference, something has to be done, and some persons must take the responsibility for doing it. A certain class of individuals will avoid such a conference because they do not wish to bear any of the consequences that will follow the decision. Such persons are not tactful; they are unjust. They make friends readily, but they do not keep them long. They seem to be working for the welfare of others, but in reality they are harming those whom they pretend to benefit.

A teacher has a reputation of being very tactful. Her tactfulness manifests itself in her ability to win the good-will of her pupils, but as years pass those pupils look back upon their teacher and declare that she was not fair. She went to the verge of dishon-

esty in telling them what they might expect for an examination; in telling them how to prepare to meet certain emergencies in school life which they were supposed to meet without being warned beforehand. Of course the young children thought the teacher was fine, but as men and women they think of her as one who tried to win her way into their hearts at the expense of justice. No one can be really tactful who is not strictly just, for injustice always reacts on the guilty one, and the reaction more than overcomes whatever has been gained by wicked or thoughtless shrewdness.

Unselfishness. One effect of knowledge issuing in sympathy is, of course, unselfishness. Selfishness and tact never go together. There are various kinds of shrewdness that often keep company with selfishness; they may help their possessor to make money or gain worldly advantages, but they never really enable him to do good as the tactful worker wishes to do. The tactful person thinks of others; the tactless person

is self-centered. Think of the selfish persons of your acquaintance! Are they tactful? You answer, Some of them have great skill in approaching others. Yes, indeed; but what is the result of their approach? In the long run do they attract or repel? Do they do good or evil? Do they touch others for their own advantage or for the benefit of those touched? For example: a young salesman, who prided himself on his knowledge of human nature, by adroit appeals to the vanity of a would-be purchaser, sold her at a very high price a piece of jewelry which she never wore, for when she reached home the members of her family laughed at her for being cheated, and she realized the truth of what they said. Had that salesman tact? Was he not rather dominated by selfishness which compelled him to make a sale, no matter what the consequences might be? The really tactful person is willing to forego present advantage in order that future good may come to others. In this respect, as in all others, Jesus is the unrivaled Example. No one has

touched more persons for their good than he. It was his absolute unselfishness that made him tactful; at the root of this unselfishness was

Love. So often have we heard the statement that it may have lost its power, but nevertheless it is true: *Love is the greatest thing in the world.* When one is thinking about tact, he dare not forget the part that love plays in it. This is how *Dr. F. N. Peloubet* writes concerning the power of love:

Visiting a greenhouse where are grown the most beautiful roses I have ever seen, I asked the gardener how it was that his roses were so much larger and more perfect than those in other greenhouses; his reply was: "Because I love them so." A paragraph in a paper applies this same principle to the Sabbath school with equal truth and beauty. A young lady teacher, who has seemed to secure a remarkable control of her Sabbath-school class, was asked the secret of her success, and said quietly, "All I know about

it is, that I love them and they love me." Is not here a secret well worth finding out? How many of us so love our scholars that they love us in return, largely from the very earnestness of our love for them? Whenever this is true, it is a long step toward our leading them to him who is love itself.

Let us read again the familiar sentences: "Love suffereth long and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself; is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not provoked, taketh no account of evil—beareth all things—endureth all things." If love were incarnate in a human body, would not the possessor of that body be tactful? The question has but to be asked to be answered. What will not love do? What will it not help one to become? Will not the loving teacher be a tactful one? This is how *Longfellow* expresses a great truth:

Love is the master of all arts,
And puts it into human hearts
The strangest things to say and do.

The Christian worker is trying to say and do those things that will win others to righteousness, to God. He is endeavoring to be tactful in speech and act. How shall he best carry out his endeavor? Shall it not be by learning to love? His prayer, therefore, need not be that God will make him more tactful, but that God will help him to love. Love that abides is more than sentiment—it has a substantial foundation. Knowledge and appreciation of God's love to me will help me to love him in return. In the measure that I love God, I will want to think God's thoughts. Then will be uttered constantly the prayer for wisdom which is promised to those who ask for it. True wisdom will lead me to seek knowledge of self and of others. Such knowledge unselfishly and systematically applied is tact. The process may be long, the discipline may be severe, but the results are well worth time and effort. He who excuses himself for lack of tact confesses that he is unwilling to pay the price that has been paid by tactful persons.

Perhaps words of caution are necessary. He who wishes to be tactful may study those who are known for their tact but should not imitate them. The power to know what to say and what to do in special circumstances comes from within—it is a condition of heart and mind, of the emotions and intellect combined. I can imitate my friend as he does a mathematical problem, but I cannot copy him as he tactfully assists his brother to a better life. If I would help another, the helpfulness must come out of what I am, never out of what I have copied from another. I must be myself, but I may improve myself from day to day so that I develop in tactfulness. Instead of imitating my tactful friend, I shall pray that my spirit may be transformed so that I, too, rid of selfishness and ignorance with its daughter prejudice, may be able to touch those about me so that my touch will be helpful.

IX

THE WORKER WITHOUT A GROUCH

INT.: ILLUSTRATIONS

A business woman

A bank clerk

HOW MAY I BE WITHOUT A GROUCH?

NEVER LOOK FOR A GRIEVANCE

Easy to find

REFUSE TO GET SORE

A game of bat-puss

LEARN TO FORGET

Do not brood

Forget slander, etc.

REALIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF YOUR WORK

KEEP IN TOUCH WITH GREAT MOVEMENTS

At a State Sunday School Convention

A laborer and a cathedral

REJOICE IN THE THOUGHT OF WORKING WITH

GOD

The day of Pentecost

Saul who became Paul

TRUST GOD

People or God

CON.: A PICTURE

IX

THE WORKER WITHOUT A GROUCH

WHAT a blessed privilege it is to work with a Christian who never has a grouch! There are many such, but their number may be increased. Hence these suggestions:

She has suffered much and to-day is bearing burdens and solving problems that would afford an excuse for grouchiness but she never manifests it. There is a smile on her face that might lead one unacquainted with her exacting business to imagine that she is without a care in the world. Her tones are always so low and melodious that one might be excused for concluding that there is nothing in her daily routine to disturb the placidity of her life. She is so willing to assume responsibilities and to do more than her duty that she might be considered a woman of leisure instead of an overworked struggler in a business that

makes heavy demands on her. She is so ready to help others that it might seem that she has nothing to do but those things which she does for those in need. God bless her, with her smiling face, pleasant voice and unostentatious self-sacrifice! She is an inspiration to her pastor, her church school superintendent and her fellow workers.

He is a bookkeeper in a national bank. At times he is so pressed with work that it seems impossible for him to do what is expected of him. In order to conserve his strength, so as to be fit to meet the demands made upon him, he is obliged to give up many enjoyments dear to the average man. One thing, however, he has no thought of relinquishing—that is his hold on his class of adolescent boys. Cheerful, patient, persevering, he teaches his class Sunday after Sunday and during the week manages to get time to help any of his boys that need him especially. He never murmurs, never complains, never pities himself because of the hardness of his lot. How his boys adore him! How his superintendent depends on

him! Humble, faithful servant of God he has no grouch.

Some one is now ready to say, I would like to be like these two teachers, if I only could. But you can, if you will. How? Here are some answers to your query: **HOW MAY I BE WITHOUT A GROUCH?**

Never look for a grievance. Here is a specimen of the kind of advice that is now being offered to young people who are asking, How may I make my life successful?

“There is nothing quite so easy to find as a grievance. It can be made to order in a second’s time, no material other than the imagination being necessary. By being on the watch for insults and injuries one has little time for the sweet enjoyments of life. Plenty of work is the best remedy for sensitive individuals—work and self-control—determination and will. Half of one’s griefs are only imaginary. Have you ever wished you might have returned to you the precious hours you spent in suffering over nothing? Don’t waste any more time that way. We

all need work. We all need rest. But, above all, we need the proper light of understanding that keeps us clear from the pits of argument, the swamps of morbidness, the stumbling blocks of worry and grief.”—*Personality*.

Shall the Christian worker be less anxious to make a success of his work than is the one who is seeking to get along well in his daily vocation? Shame on him, if he is! Let us take it for granted that he wants to be at his best and to do his best. Then he will resolutely set himself to find the best in every one and in everything. The one thing that he will not look for is a cause for a grievance. When he has come to this determination he has gone far toward being without a grouch.

Refuse to get sore. The wise worker is willing to learn, no matter who his instructor may be. Such a one will not be above receiving help from an incident like this:

“A little boy, playing the classic game of bat-puss in Mulberry Bend Park, offered a

piece of urgent advice to his companions which ought to be heard and taken to heart by all the world, his wife and all his relatives. There was a hitch in the game. One of the young experts in the intricacies of bat-puss had complained that a rule of the game had been violated. He demanded reparation and redress with passion equal to that displayed by the most emotional of statesmen at Versailles. It appeared that the game was about to break up. But one youngster, with the authority of his strong determination to keep up the game, called out persuasively, 'Don't get sore!' The disputing players paused in their wrangle long enough to hear the peacemaker's advice, then dropped their controversy and the game went on.

"Take your part in the game. Take it cheerfully, smilingly and with a full conviction that Right will win in the end; that Right will win over all the forces, all the machinations, all the craft, cunning and overreaching brutality of all the powers of darkness.

“ ‘Don’t get sore.’ ”—*New York Evening Mail*.

He who refuses to get sore, no matter what the provocation may be, will be without a grouch and will be a continual benediction to others.

There is a positive side to all this which may be kept in mind and put into practice on the theory that the issues of life depend not so much on its crises as on the way its innumerable small things are met and conquered. He who is really desirous of being without a grouch will

Learn to forget. The petty annoyances inevitable to Christian work, the faultfinding of others, the lack of appreciation for sacrificial service, if brooded over, will make the one who keeps them in mind very grouchy. If, on the contrary, they are accepted as parts of the necessary ills of life and dropped from the mind as one drops a hurtful object from the hand, there will be no foundation for a grouch. “But,” one objects, “it is easy enough to give such ad-

vice, but how can it be put into practice?" The answer is: By the exercise of that will power which belongs to every person and which becomes strong only by exercise. It is in accordance with this philosophy that the following exhortations are made:

"If you would increase your happiness and prolong your life, forget your neighbor's faults. Forget the slander you have heard. Forget the temptations. Forget your faultfinding and give a little thought to the cause which provoked it. Forget the peculiarities of your friends, and only remember the good points which make you fond of them. Forget all personal quarrels or histories you may have heard by accident, and which, if repeated, would seem a thousand times worse than they are. Blot out as far as possible all the disagreeables of life; they will come, but they will grow larger when you remember them, and the constant thought of the acts of meanness, or, worse still, malice, will only tend to make you more familiar with them. Obliterate everything disagreeable from yester-

day; start out with a clean sheet for to-day, and write upon it for sweet memory's sake only those things which are lovely and lovable."—*The Trumpeter*.

Shall not the servant of Jesus Christ go farther than this and say with emphasis? God helping me *I will* forget these and other things, not for my own sake only, but also for the sake of those whom I am endeavoring to influence for good and for the sake of my fellow-workers. God's grace, reinforcing your will really put into action, will make you a worker without a grouch, commending the Gospel of Christ by life as well as by words.

Realize the importance of your particular work. If it seems a small matter to do Christian work, it will be easy to have a continual grouch, for many things will occur to annoy and irritate. He who is always on the point of resigning because he is not accomplishing what he wishes probably has a very imperfect view of what his work means. He who can picture one of his pu-

pils become a useful Christian prepared to help carry on the work of the Kingdom of God after his teacher has gone to his reward will not have a false or low conception of the importance of his work. He who can make himself really believe that God has called him to influence many lives not for time only but also for eternity will have an increased appreciation of the value of what he is doing. He who can rise to the place where he really believes that he is working with God on the most important material—human beings—will be without a grouch. We ask in all reverence, Is it possible to think of Jesus with a grouch? Why not? Did he not have provocation enough? Indeed he did, but he was so impressed with the importance of what the heavenly Father had sent him to do that he did not yield to provocation. Perhaps the most effective method of subduing a grouchy feeling is to put a proper estimate on the value of the work being done.

Keep in touch with great movements of life. One reason assigned for the discontent

of many industrial workers is that their work is monotonous—without inspiration, initiative or incentive. They do the same thing over and over again without realizing that what they produce is a part of a much-needed whole. The Christian should be careful to avoid this narrowness. He should magnify his work, because of its relationship to the great movements in life, movements far reaching in their effects on humanity and in the advancement of the Kingdom of God. With these movements the teacher should keep in touch so as to be benefited by their reactions on his own life and on his especial work. The entire attitude of a teacher toward his school and his pupils was changed after three days' attendance at a State Sunday-School Convention where he caught glimpses of the great things being accomplished in the Sunday-school world. He saw his own efforts in their proper perspective as very vital and necessary parts of a most important movement. Henceforth he was not only a teacher without a grouch but also a self-appointed

backer-up of the superintendent in efforts to enlist others in the Sunday-school cause. It will repay any teacher to read and reread such an illustration as this:

“There is a story told of a laborer who used to point with pride to the great cathedral in his native city, and say, ‘I had a hand in that.’ It is true that his work was of the humblest, a mere stone mason. The architect who designed the splendid building never heard of him. The artist who painted the frescoes on its walls would have passed by this artisan in his workman’s blouse without a glance. Yet he was right in thinking of himself as their fellow-worker, and holding up his head with the best of them.

“Have a share in the big achievements of this twentieth century, in the irresistible advancement of the temperance cause, in the conquering spread of missions, in some one of the big movements which are going to transform this earth of ours into the likeness of the Kingdom of Heaven. It does not matter if your part is small, provided it is

as large as you can make it. Do your share, so you can say of these great enterprises your generation will carry to achievement, 'I had a hand in them.'"—*Young People's Weekly*.

Rejoice in the thought of working with God. It is not difficult to picture the despair of the earliest disciples of Jesus when they realized that their Master had died on the cross. Despair gave place to joy when they knew that he had risen from the dead. A still greater change was effected by the events of the day of Pentecost. The apostles understood then that they were working with God. Afterward Saul of Tarsus, who became Paul, a bond servant of Jesus Christ, put this realization of the consciousness of working with God into such practical and resultful effect that he is an outstanding example of what God can perform in coöperation with a human being devoted to him. Can you picture Paul with a grouch? Listen to him singing at midnight as he lies bound in the recesses of the Phi-

lippian jail. In obedience to the Spirit of God he had given up his own plan of service and did as he was directed. And the result? Imprisonment—just as he was beginning the work which he understood the Spirit was leading him to do. Surely he might have complained of such treatment! He might have had a grouch. But no—he sang praises to God, for he realized that no matter where he was or what was done to him he was working with God.

The study of psychology, pedagogy, psychology and human nature should have as large a place as possible in the life of every worker, for the more he knows about these things the better able will he be to co-operate with God. No one can know too much about the Bible nor be too familiar with its truths. No method is too good to be employed in God's service. But above and beyond all these things the worker should realize, with ever increasing joy and confidence, that he is working with God. As this realization grows the possibility of being obsessed with a grievance be-

comes less and less until a grouch becomes an impossibility.

Trust God. If one is working with God; if he is a junior partner in a firm of which God is the senior partner he will trust the head of the firm. There is much nonsensical prattle about the omniscience, the omnipotence, the omnipresence of God. If God is wise, powerful and everywhere, then the only care that the worker need exercise is in regard to adjustment. His supreme business should be to adjust himself to God, to come into right relationship with his Father. Are people wrong? God is right. Are people harsh, unkind, unloving? God is love. Are people lacking in appreciation, false, hypocritical? God knows, is true and will treat his servant justly. Not a cup of cold water given when the giver is in partnership with God shall fail of its reward.

Does not, then, this whole matter of grouchiness resolve itself into lack of trust? Can a person really trust God and have a grouch? If you have a grouch, be honest

with yourself instead of emphasizing what others have done or have failed to do to you or for you, endeavor to ascertain what has come in between God and you, what has caused you to turn from him. When you realize your lack of trust and turn to your God for help he will be to you what Jesus was to Peter when the self-confident disciple imagined that he could walk on the waves of the Sea of Galilee without divine help.

Picture a church with every worker in it without a grouch, manifested or concealed! You cannot produce such a result. No, but you can be a worker without a grouch if you will to be such and will let God help you become what he wishes you to be.

X

THE WORKER IN GOD'S SCHOOL

INT.: ANNIE AND HER PASTOR

TEACHERS IN GOD'S SCHOOL

DISAPPOINTMENT

His appointment

FAILURE

Jesus, Washington, Lincoln

ILLNESS

Paul's thorn

Bella Cook

EXPERIENCE

A man of seventy-five

WORK

Many departments

Carlyle's saying

LAW

The physicist

The electrician

PROMOTIONS

Individual

No set times for

Be ready

To more service

GRADUATION

A young worker

Promoted at twenty-three

CON.: IN GOD'S SCHOOL NOTHING IS DEFECTIVE

X

THE WORKER IN GOD'S SCHOOL

LONG and earnest was Annie's talk with her pastor to whom she had gone with a burdened heart. Her life was awry; her service for others seemed to be a series of failures. And she had expected to do so much for God and man.

Gently at first but with growing earnestness as the conversation proceeded, the minister pointed out to the young woman how much she had to learn before she became an efficient worker. During her college course she had specialized with the intention of devoting her life to service for others. Sociology, psychology and pedagogy had been studied, not as fads but as preparations for her real life work. All this had been supplemented by real Bible study.

"Why then am I such a failure with people while Mrs. Blank, who never went to college and has had little opportunity for

special study, is a success?" inquired the disconsolate young woman.

"To me, the answer is easy," said the good man. "While Mrs. Blank lacks many educational advantages enjoyed by you, she has been a responsive student in God's school and has not only given diligent heed to the teachers in that school, but has also profited much by their instruction."

"Tell me about God's school and its teachers."

The minister did so. Instead of depreciating what Annie had learned in schools and college he magnified the value of her studies and urged her to continue them, but to supplement them by learning the other things God was endeavoring to teach her. This she promised to do. Let us hope she will be greatly helped. As there are many who may be benefited by having attention called to God's school the following is offered for their consideration:

TEACHERS IN GOD'S SCHOOL

These are many and varied; they are at

work all the time. Particular attention may be paid to some of them. Here is a mighty teacher whose name is

Disappointment. Dr. T. L. Cuyler writes, "God keeps a school for his children on earth and one of his best teachers is disappointment." The well-known statement, "Disappointment may be written His appointment," is worthy of most serious consideration.

"Disappointment—His appointment,"
Change one letter, then I see
That the thwarting of my purpose
Is God's better choice for me.

His appointment must be blessing,
Though it may come in disguise,
For the end from the beginning
Open to his wisdom lies.

—*Selected.*

Let us, however, be honest in considering disappointments. With many of them God has nothing at all to do; they are the natural results of ignorance, wilfulness or selfishness. Even from such disappointments God can bring blessings, for he can "make all things work together for good to them

that love him." On the other hand, to those who are consciously in God's school, really willing to be taught by him, he brings many disappointments in preparation for the blessings he bestows. Blessed is the one who accepts disappointment as a teacher sent by God. Blessed is he who says, Heavenly Father, show me the meaning of this and I will profit by it.

In God's school another teacher is

Failure. Of course this teacher is very like the one just considered, but he is much more severe in his discipline. To be disappointed is bad; to fail is much worse, and yet failure may be the teacher mightily used of God for the benefit of one in his school. How easy it is to make a general statement like this! But particulars are not wanting. A volume might be written on the failures of Jesus. Washington failed over and over again before he started his beloved country on the way to success. Lincoln failed many times, but he always learned from his failures.

Take any great discovery or any epoch-making invention—behind it will be found a path frequently marked with the word “failure.” Come closer home and consider your own case. What has become of your repeated failures? If you are in God’s school, you have so profited by them that much of your present success is due to them. If you want to know how great a teacher failure is, ask some one who is being used by God for the welfare of others.

Illness. This is another mighty instructor in God’s school. Again careful discrimination must be made. God must not be charged with bringing illness upon his children. Illness may be the resultant of an ancestor’s sin or folly; it may be caused by others; it may be brought on by one’s own ignorance or sin. Mysterious dispensations of providence cease to be mysterious when the relation of effect to cause is traced. Whatever may be the cause of illness or pain, God uses it as an effective instructor for those who will be taught by it. What

was Paul's thorn in the flesh? Who knows? Doubtless it drew him nearer to him whose grace was sufficient, so that through it he learned many valuable lessons. Bella Cook, physically helpless, was so well instructed that she was a remarkable witness for Christ. When the worker becomes a pupil in God's school and realizes how weak he is then may he become strong with a strength not his own. Nay, nay, worker below par physically, do not resign; enter God's school, let your illness or your pain be your teacher and you will learn so to glorify your Lord that you yourself will be richly blessed. If the host of church school teachers who are physically below par would cease bewailing their weakness and be instructed by it so as to practice the lessons taught a marvelous forward movement would be inaugurated in religious instruction. A fourth teacher is

Experience. This is a teacher in God's school who walks side by side with all the teachers we have so far considered. A man

who has passed the three-quarters of a century milestone has profited so little from this instructor that he is almost as foolish as he was fifty years ago. Fortunately he is a rare exception. Most persons accept experience as a teacher and make more or less resolute efforts to profit from her instruction. Guided by experience one may become worldly-wise, shrewd, able to look out for "number one." Such a one, however, is not in God's school, for the discipline of that school has but one chief object—the development of love, love for God above everything else and then love for man manifested in self-sacrifice for him. He whose motto is: "Serve in love," is in God's school. With experience as his teacher he will learn how to give expressional activity to his adopted motto, so that while he is honoring his Creator he will be helping his fellows. Is it not worth a great deal to be thus taught? Is there not much mis-called service that must be offensive to the Almighty? How much that is labeled service is really hurtful to those supposed to be

served? Experience, as a teacher in God's school, will not only answer these and other questions, but will also indicate how genuine service may be performed so that it will be acceptable to the Lord while it results in blessing to the servant as well as to those served. A priceless teacher is experience to the student who wishes to be unselfishly wise. *Bayard Taylor* has not expressed the whole truth in regard to experience, but he has at least given the developing worker something to think about in the following quatrain :

“To truth's house there is a single door,
Which is Experience. He teaches best,
Who feels the hearts of all men in his breast,
And knows their strength or weakness through
his own.”

Work. This is a teacher employed by God in his school to give instruction to any one willing to profit by it. Multitudes engage in manual and intellectual labor with so little appreciation of what work means that they go through life lamenting their fate or cursing their lot only to come to an

old age of bitterness and hardness. How different it is with the one enrolled in God's school! With work as his teacher instead of his taskmaster he learns so many valuable lessons that he wants to go on and on. God's school has many departments both here and "over there." Some there are who get no higher than the kindergarten here, because they go to school unwillingly and only occasionally. Some advance through school, high school and college. As they do so learning from their teacher, work, they realize that all their schooling here is but preparatory to the post-graduate courses "there." So they press forward, often wearied, sometimes discouraged, frequently tempted to give up, but under the inspiration of what they are taught by work persevering until graduation day comes. *Carlyle* says, "Blessed is he who has found his work, let him ask no other blessedness." Nay, let him so be taught by his work and in his work that he shall learn that he is working with God. It is blessed to work; it is more blessed to work unselfishly for oth-

ers; it is most blessed to know that one is working with God in the furtherance of his purposes for mankind. This blessedness belonged to Jesus whose one aim was to do his Father's will; it belonged to the great apostle to the Gentiles; it has been the possession of many. The Christian in God's school heeding the lessons taught by his work also has this blessedness. Who would not long to possess it? Who would not go to school in order to have it?

Law. Severe and inexorable is this teacher in God's school. God has his beneficent laws—in the physical, mental, social, moral, spiritual realms. There are those who know and obey these laws in one or more of these realms, but not in the other realms. There is, for example, the physicist, who has studied God's physical laws, who scoffs at the mention of a spiritual realm with its laws. There are those posing as exponents of social laws who seem to ignore the moral laws of the universe. The teacher who matriculates and progresses in God's

school learns that the Master of that school has his laws in various realms and that one must get acquainted with and obey all law if he is to become a master workman. The electrician knows some of the laws governing the control and use of electricity. The real student of spiritual things knows some of the laws of the spirit. The point that should ever be kept in the foreground is this: Electricity and its laws are no more real than are the spiritual life and its laws. The student in God's school, taught by that marvelous teacher which we have called law, will learn these things and many others. He will put himself into subjection to laws and a result will be that they will become his servants. Imagine a worker having as his allies physical, mental, moral, social, spiritual laws! There is no such worker, the objector interposes. But there will be many such as soon as they are willing to act on the instruction given by God's teachers in his school.

These are by no means all the instructors in God's school. They are dwelt upon here

because not so much attention has been paid to them as to some others. Among these others are good men and women, prayer, fellowship with God and above all others the Holy Spirit, who is God's chief Teacher in the world at the present time. While God in his school has teachers many in number and differing greatly in their methods, every one of them has much to give the receptive pupil. He who accepts the Holy Spirit as his teacher will progress most rapidly and farthest in his work for God as manifested in service for men. Let this prayer, then, be in our hearts:

“Holy Spirit, Teacher, thou,
At the throne of grace we bow;
Come, perform thine office now,
Teach us evermore.

“Holy Spirit, teach us ever,
Comfort, guide and leave us never;
Dwell within us, we implore,
Now and evermore.”

Lest any one should think that to follow the teachers in God's school savors of mysticism and therefore tends to lessen practicality in life, the following statements of

H. Addington Bruce are quoted from *The Globe and Commercial Advertiser*: "Mystics have a tendency to outlive other men. They have a tendency to outwork other men. And they have a tendency to become leaders of men. Tolstoi was a mystic. Think of the work he did. Think of the power in the many books he wrote. Think of the profound impression he has made on the world. Contrast Tolstoi's place in history with that of the merely practical men of the Russia of his day. Even the names of most of these are already forgotten. Joan of Arc was a mystic. So was 'Chinese' Gordon, admittedly one of England's most illustrious soldiers. Can the adjective 'futile' be justly applied to their careers? St. Ignatius was a mystic, but he also was 'one of the most powerfully practical human engines that ever lived.' The same is true of St. Teresa, St. Francis of Assisi and other notable mystics of the long ago. St. Catherine of Siena, one of the most mystical of all mystics, was equally famous for her mysticism and for her ability to work for the public good. She

had an 'astonishing practical genius for affairs, and immense power of ruling men.' Mysticism clearly is not so futile as is the habit of uncritically assuming that it must be futile. Actually it would seem to be a marvelous energizer; an energizer so potent that it is hardly surprising to find one sympathetic historian of mysticism declaring, 'He who says the mystic is but half a man states the exact opposite of the truth. Truly the mystic can be called a whole man, since in others half the powers of the self always sleep.' It is time that we stopped sneering at mysticism and begun to study it." *

The world is greatly in need of mystics like Joseph, Moses, Jesus, Paul, Luther and Moody.

PROMOTIONS

In connection with any school it is but natural to think about promotions. It is to be regretted that too many students look upon promotion as the goal instead of being

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chiefly concerned with what is to be learned at school. In God's school the lessons learned count for much. Nevertheless there are promotions in this school but they differ radically from the promotions in ordinary schools. Some of these differences are the following:

Promotions are individual. In ordinary schools the promotion is by groups or classes. In many institutions of learning almost the entire body of students is promoted. Not so in God's school. The Head of the school deals not with classes but with individuals. Every one is advanced as he is ready for promotion. The superficial observer might conclude that in these promotions there is much of injustice and partiality. But this is only seeming, for when the great design of the school and the Master's standards of judgment are understood it will have been realized that exact fairness was displayed in the promotions.

There are no set times for promotions,

Multitudes of pupils in our schools look forward to the latter part of January as the time set for promotion. College students hope to be promoted in June. In God's school there are no such promotion days. At times God's promotion seems so long delayed that there is a tendency on the part of many to murmur or even rebel against his treatment. Again the promotion comes so suddenly as to surprise the one promoted and to cause those who do not understand the facts to think that a very serious mistake has been made. For years a church school teacher studied and toiled without seeming to get anywhere in particular. Not only did he teach a number of classes of different kinds of pupils, but he was indefatigable in working on committees and otherwise advancing the welfare of the school. Suddenly, seemingly without preparation or warning, he was chosen to superintend a very large progressive church school. The choice fell upon him because no one else would assume the responsibility of the superintendency. He accepted the new

work on condition that he was to take it on trial for a year with the understanding that if he was convinced that God wanted him in this position he would continue. Before the year was over everybody who really longed for the welfare of the school was convinced that he was the very best man for the leadership. He continued in this position for years. Guided by God working through his humble servant the large, well-organized, effective church school increased in numbers, became better organized and developed in efficiency. God made no mistake in the promotion, for the young man had been many years in his school, had learned his lessons so well that when the time for longer service came he was prepared for it.

Sometimes God's promotions appear to be demotions. A young man taught a large adult Bible class with great acceptance to the students and to the officers of the school. Suddenly he was asked to give up his much loved class and become the teacher of a group of adolescent boys. At first he resented the suggestion as being a reflection

on his power to teach, but after earnest prayer to ascertain God's will he took the class to learn afterward that he had really been promoted, for he was convinced that it was much harder to teach his boys than the adults whom he had left. So deeply was this truth impressed upon him that many times since then he has accepted apparent demotions, because he was willing to obey God, to find later on that he had been promoted. This brings us to another great truth, namely, In God's school

Promotion is to more service. God's method of rewarding faithfulness is to give the faithful one something more difficult to do. This is one of the hardest lessons to be learned. The one who learns it early in life has progressed far on the way to blessedness. Many who accept this fact later in life have missed most of the real joy of service that might have been theirs. He who is planning to render as little service to God as possible has unmistakable evidence that he is not in God's school. A shirker has not

even matriculated; a timeserver does not even understand the curriculum, for in this school success is rewarded by the successful one being given more to do. He who is promoted to a higher grade has greater responsibilities to carry. "Well done, thou good servant—because thou wast found faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities."

GRADUATION

He had struggled against poverty and succeeded in getting an education which fitted him for the responsible position he filled with great acceptance to all concerned. It was a severe shock to his friend who received the announcement of his premature death. Why, after all his preparation to live well and work effectively for others, should he die so young? Then came the consolation: He is not dead; the Controller of the universe needs him elsewhere; he has been graduated. If life here were all, then his schooling was in vain; his struggles were for naught. But his brief sojourn here was

but part of his preparation for his greater work there.

She was only twenty-three years old when her spirit left its frail body. Endowed by God with talents that had been developed so that service of the very highest order could be expected of her, she laid down her work as it was just begun. With a devotion rarely found in one of her years she had planned a life of self-sacrifice, which was made impossible by the advent of an incurable disease. Her mother not only knew and loved this youngest daughter but she also knew and loved God. Moreover, she trusted him so fully that when the girls of her daughter's church school class questioned the goodness of God in allowing their beloved teacher to be taken from them, she was able to lead them out of their selfishness by showing them that God made no mistake in taking their teacher, for she was prepared for better service in some other part of his kingdom.

Not only were the girls comforted but they promised to prepare themselves to

carry on the work laid down by their young teacher.

In God's school there is nothing defective in the curriculum, nothing haphazard in the discipline, for the Headmaster knows the end as well as the beginning. Promotion days come surely as the students are prepared. Some day to every pupil in the school will come graduation. Who then will be a wise and faithful learner to whom his Lord will say, "Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord"?

APPENDIX

SELF-DECEPTION

THERE IS NO GREATER DECEPTION THAN SELF-DECEPTION though three-fourths of the human family probably doubt such to be the case. We feel so sure of our own native ability to cope with every question and to be right in our judgments and are so unwilling to ask advice and so ready to jump at conclusions that, like Benjamin Franklin, we “pay too much for a whistle,” as he so often told his friends.—*John Wanamaker.*

THE RANGE OF HUMAN NATURE

Nothing is more astounding than the internal range of human nature. Not only are there people both living and dead who are clearly either heroes or villains, but in the heart of every person there are purity and vulgarity, courage and cowardice, nobility and meanness, sublimity and triviality, unselfishness and selfishness. The human heart is a garden where lovely flowers and poisonous weeds grow side by side. Life is dangerous.

A good man sitting in church at half past

eleven on Sunday morning may be in a hallowed frame of mind; at that moment it would seem incredible to him that he could be coarse, or profane, or petulant, or mean. Yet before sunset that same person may be swearing in rage, or tempted by sensual imaginings, or exhibit the evidences of petty jealousy and selfish egotism. Out of the same mouth, said the Apostle James, proceedeth blessing and cursing.

—*William Lyon Phelps.*

HUMAN NATURE

The Woman found her Lady Neighbor wearing a greatly perturbed expression, and inquired the cause. Indignantly the Lady Neighbor poured out her just complaint:

“I’m terribly upset. The janitor’s wife usually takes her little Katrina to school and goes after her. Yesterday she didn’t get there at closing time and the teacher actually asked my Elise to see that Katrina got safely home. Now I’ve got to take time to go to school and tell that teacher that my Elise will *not* bring home any *janitor’s* child, nor be bothered with her in any way. Such a nuisance for me to go to school—when I shall be late to the foreign missionary

meeting at the church, and we have a speaker on Indo-China, too!"

The Lady Neighbor marched away to school to give the presumptuous teacher a piece of her churchly mind!—*The Woman Who Sees in The New York Sun.*

WHEN THE WORLD IS WRONG

When you begin to think that the world is all wrong, it is time to give yourself a thorough investigation. Anybody will find something wrong, somebody hard to get along with, some superior unfair, but when you discover that everybody is hard to get along with and that there is no justice anywhere, you need to take yourself in hand, for that is the source of the trouble.

A young fellow may lose his job for a reason that does not reflect upon him in the least, but if he is all the time losing his job, if he never keeps any but a short time, it is foolish for him to talk about the jealousy of some fellow-worker, or the injustice of his employer.

When you reach the conclusion that the world is wrong take yourself in hand. You may need a tonic or you may need more sleep. Perhaps

the trouble is that you bolt your food, or that you read the wrong kind of books, or have chosen undesirable associates. One fact is certain, the trouble is with yourself.

—*Young People's Weekly.*

“If you cannot get along with two or three people,” says Albert Edward Wiggam, “there may be something wrong with them. But if you cannot get on with ten or twelve people, there is something wrong with you.”

COMPLEXES VS. COMMON SENSE

The Woman was coming in from Jackson Heights on the bus. The topic of conversation of two women in front of her turned on the various complexes with which humanity is bothered.

They were evidently discussing a mutual acquaintance. The lady in maroon said, “she has the queerest complexes!” Her companion, belying the dove gray costume she wore, replied with a sniff: “Complex? Humph! You mean she’s just queer.”

“Well, maybe it is ‘queer,’ but she does the strangest things. She is absolutely a crank

about using matches. Makes her maid, when she can keep one, use paper tapers made out of old newspapers instead of matches. Thank goodness, I have nothing queer about me." Her virtuous air was vastly becoming, but suddenly the man who sat next to the woman came to life. Leaning forward, he grunted:

"How about the electric lights?" The wife turned with a start and a not altogether pleasant expression on her face. "Oh," she began loftily, "you mean about turning out the lights! Why, that's not a complex; that's common sense."

" 'Tisn't common sense when you bark your shins every time you return to a room which you have just left for a minute, or when you fall down the front stairs just because the light is suddenly turned out."

Silence reigned for a few seconds on the front seat, then the conversation was resumed feverishly, but the topic of conversation was changed. —*The Woman Who Sees in The New York Sun.*

COULDN'T FOOL CHARLIE

Up in the Ozarks there was a hill billy who had a family of twenty-one boys. He and his wife drove to town once a year for supplies, but

the rest of the family had never seen a sidewalk. The oldest boy, who was twenty-four years old, had never had a haircut or a shave in his life and never looked in a mirror.

On the annual trip to town the old man picked up a looking-glass at the store and stuck it inside a crate, with the remark, "Maw, it's time the young-uns seen theirselves." Back home the boys rushed out to the wagon, looking for candy and peanuts. There was a burst of guffaws from the oldest boy who was staring in the crate at the looking-glass.

"Charlie, what you-all laffin' at?" demanded one of the other boys.

"Nawthun," said Charlie, still cackling.

"Charlie, what ails you?" demanded his mother.

" 'Tain't nawthin', Maw," drawled Charlie.

"Charlie, if you don't tell me, I'm a-goin' to whup ye," she snapped.

"Aw, well, Maw," said he, "I'll tell ye. Paw's bought a wolf."—*Everybody's Magazine*.

A PRAYER

Lord! help me to see myself as thou dost see me and as others see me. Amen.

EACH IN HIS PLACE

A little gold watch was one day crossing Westminster Bridge, London, at the time when Big Ben tolled out the hour of noon from the clock tower on the Parliament Building.

The little watch looked up at the big clock and said:

"I do not like you! Your face is too broad, your hands are too big, your voice is too coarse. I do not like you!"

And the big clock said to the gold watch: "Come up here, little sister! Come up here!"

So the little watch toiled painfully up the stone steps, and at last stood by the big clock. Looking out over the surging millions of London, the big clock said to the watch:

"Little sister, there is a man down there on Westminster Bridge who wishes to know the hour. Will you tell him, please?"

The little watch said: "Oh, I could never make him hear! My voice is so small it never could begin to carry in such a whirlwind of noise as this."

The big clock said: "Oh, yes, little sister, I had forgotten! Yet the man wishes to know the time, he requires to know, and you cannot

tell him, but I can and will. So let us henceforth not criticize one another! You will not find fault with me, nor I find fault with you, but each of us in our own place, you for your mistress, and I for the great city, will teach men everywhere to redeem the time.”—*Dr. Joseph Parker, in Record of Christian Work.*

GETTING ALONG WITH HUMAN NATURE

Undoubtedly there are people who are truly saintly in heart and life. But every one of them is human and has faults and at times is trying. Paul found Peter difficult in spots. The best of us needs patience from others.

It is well to remember this in our church work. We are still human though we are church members and we need to make allowance for one another. We ought not to expect perfect wisdom, patience and temperament in a church fellowship. If we do, we shall be disappointed. There is no such church. If there were, they would not let you and me in. It is fortunate that perfection is not exacted of us in order that we may continue among Christ's followers. Nor should we expect it from our fellow-members.

But this does not constitute an excuse for lowering our personal standards. It is neces-

sary that we should make all possible allowance in thinking of our fellow-members as we note their mistakes, weaknesses and littlenesses as participants in a social group. But we are not entitled to make such allowance for ourselves. There we must be strict and exacting. Offences will come, but woe is me if I commit them. I am entitled to square myself by nothing lower than the highest ideal, our great Pattern, the perfect Son of Man. But as he said to another, "neither do I condemn thee," so we should feel toward those about us. Strict within, patient and kindly without, is a good Christian motto.

In all social enterprises, from the home to the nation and the world, it is well that we should learn that we have to put up with one another as we are. Our problem is how to make good and achieve the Kingdom with human nature as it is and not as it might be. There are good qualities in all people and the question for each one of us is how we can so adjust our contacts as to evoke those good qualities and coöperate with them for the service of Christ.

A sense of humor will save us from much grief by enabling us to look with uncritical kindness upon the foibles of humanity. A good

laugh has relieved many a strained situation and resolved many a difficulty. We can imagine that Paul must have smiled a bit as he wrote that he had learned to suffer fools gladly.

Beyond question God knew what he was doing when he set our human problems in the present terms. It is no doubt good for us that life is not too easy and that we carry on our co-operative plans with a bit of friction at times. It is all part of the discipline of life.

The question for all churches, as for all social groups, is, can we get together and make good?

—*Presbyterian Outlook.*

FOR JONES OR SMITH?

BY J. P. HOFFMAN

I heard an unusually strong sermon last Sunday on the tendency of men to shift their moral responsibility to their neighbors. It fit old man Jones perfectly. I felt sorry for him. Not that he didn't deserve it, perhaps, but he is a member of the church and probably does all that his conscience demands.

I tried to avoid shaking hands with him after the meeting, not knowing just what I might say to sooth his wounded feelings; but, as I was standing in the background waiting for folks to

go, I felt a touch on my shoulder and there stood Jones himself, looking decidedly agitated.

“What did you think of the sermon to-day?” he asked abruptly.

“Well,” I answered truthfully, “I thought it was rather strong, a little too strong, perhaps, brother, but ——”

“It wasn’t strong enough! I’ve known Dan Smith for twenty years, and when the preacher painted that word picture of him to-day the old reprobate never batted an eye. I felt sorry for him at first, but when he sat there so brazenly through all of it as if the minister was talking about Brother Brown or Elder Rowe I wished the sermon had been stronger so as actually to get under his tough old skin.”

When I recovered from my surprise Jones was gone, so I joined Mary and we started home.

“Do you know, John,” she said, “I was talking to Mr. and Mrs. Dan Smith for a few minutes just before you came, and what do you think? Mr. Smith said that he wouldn’t have been in Mr. Bentley’s place to-day for a farm. He thought the minister was describing Mr. Bentley exactly. And Mr. Smith said that Mr. Bentley deserved the sermon, too, but that he

had felt real sorry for him while the preacher talked so plainly. I didn't think the minister meant Ben Bentley at all, did you?"

"Mary," I said, "human beings are peculiar folks. They go to church to get a blessing and then miss most of the benefits of the sermon by thinking that the minister is preaching about their neighbors. They are just the same in church as they are everywhere else.

"A man will rant and rave about his town lacking public spirit and he himself won't take the time from his business to serve on a public welfare committee unless he can be the chairman. A man will blame the schools for failing to teach children respect for lawful authority, when he keeps moonshine in his cellar and drives his car down Main Street at thirty miles an hour. A man will smoke a pipe and wonder what alley gang taught his boy to smoke cigarettes. A lot of folks are frantically searching for the cause of so many of our young people going wrong. Well, if every father and every mother were setting the right sort of examples for their children day in and day out, there would be mighty little cause for worry about the young people. 'Dad' and 'Ma' are the ones to watch their steps first;

but when the preacher tells the truth to them they think he means their neighbor on the left.

“Now that was a very good sermon to-day, and every one will readily admit it; but the trouble is that every one thinks it was very good for his neighbor. It certainly hit straight and hard but it always hit the other fellow. Too bad. Too bad.”

“Yes,” said Mary, “it is too bad. I am afraid our minister wasted his time to-day. I fear that the only listeners who took the sermon to heart and applied it to themselves are you and I, John.”

“I? You and I? Well—er—yes. Yes, of course, of course!”

I looked at Mary but she was looking the other way, and so, as her attention had been drawn elsewhere, I—well, I just let the matter drop.

—*The Continent.*

CRITICISM

It's easy enough to pick out flaws

In the work that others have done,
To point out errors that others have made

When your own task you haven't begun;
It's easy enough to fuss and find fault

When others are doing their best,
To sneer at the little they have achieved,
When you have done nothing but rest.

It's easy enough to cavil and carp,
To criticize, scoff and deride,
For few of us ever have done perfect work,
No matter how hard we have tried;
It is easy enough not to speak of the best
And to dwell all the time on the worst,
And perhaps it is proper sometimes to find
fault,
But be sure that you've done something
first.

—*Lookout.*

A FRIEND'S RULES

1. I will always seek to discover the best and strongest points in my brother's position.
2. I will give him credit for sincerity.
3. I will try to avoid classifying him, and assuming that he has all the characteristics of the class to which he is supposed to belong.
4. I will emphasize our agreements.
5. When others criticize I will try to bring out favorable points.
6. When there is misunderstanding, either I of him, or he of me, I will go to him direct.
7. I will seek opportunities to pray together.
8. I will try to remember that I may be mistaken and that God's truth is too big for any one mind.
9. I will never ridicule another's faith.
10. If I have been betrayed into criticizing another, I will seek the first opportunity of finding out if my criticism is just.
11. I will not listen to gossip and second-hand information.
12. I will pray for those from whom I differ.

—Dr. Henry Hodgkin.

BEHIND THE WINDOW

“Each man is the window
Through which his soul must see
The world about him every day;
And if his window be
Cobwebbed with doubt, or stained with sin,
Or if its glass be blue,
He sees a bad unhappy world—
But will the sight be true?”

“Each man has the power
To keep his window clear,
To polish it until it shines,
And lo! how bright appear
The daily sights, the daily joys,
That greet his outward view!
He sees a good and hopeful world—
And what he sees is true.”

—*Author unknown.*

“IF I KNEW YOU AND YOU KNEW ME”

W. E. COOPER

If I knew you and you knew me,
’Tis seldom we would disagree;
But, never having yet clasped hands,
Both often fail to understand
That each intends to do what’s right
And treat each other “honor bright.”
How little to complain there’d be
If I knew you and you knew me.

Occasionally things go wrong—
Sometimes our fault, sometimes theirs—
Forbearance would decrease all cares;
Kind friend, how pleasant things would be
If I knew you and you knew me.
Then let no doubting thoughts abide
Of firm good faith on either side;
Confidence to each other give,
Living ourselves, let others live;
But any time you come this way,
That you will call we hope and pray;
Then face to face we each shall see
And I’ll know you and you’ll know me.

—*Reprint from Type Metal Magazine.*

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SYMPATHIZE
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